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Generals Lushev, Lobov View Warsaw Pact's End

PM0103170191 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 1 Mar 91 First Edition p 5

[Correspondent N. Belan report: "Warsaw Pact Lowers Flags"]

[Text] Budapest—...On the television screen the war in the Persian Gulf was blazing. There were shots of the rapid offensive by the coalition's ground forces, devastated Iraqi targets, and abandoned hardware, guns were thundering, and explosions were flaring, and none of this tied in with the silence that hung over the Danube embankment. There was a smell of steaming ground and melted snow, and spring freshness was streaming in through open windows. We were sitting in a fashionable room in Budapest's Duna Intercontinental Hotel and discussing what we had been witnessing and participating in.

"World War II ended in 1945, and today, if you like, bloc confrontation and the 'cold' war have ended," my interlocutor—Army General V. Lobov, chief of staff of the Warsaw Pact Joint Armed Forces—said. Although it is now possible to say former chief of the former staff: At the extraordinary conference of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee a protocol was signed on the abolition of its military organs and structures by 31 March 1991. This means the Defense Ministers' Committee, the Joint Command, the Military Council, the Military Scientific-Technical Council of the Joint Armed Forces, and also the Warsaw Pact states' Combined Air Defense System.

"The Great Patriotic War syndrome lived for a very long time in our people," Vladimir Nikolayevich Lobov continued. "They gave of their utmost for defense, just so that the bad times of war would not be repeated. However, it is not only a matter of memory. There was also the 'cold war' unleashed by the United States and its allies. In 1949 they created the NATO bloc, which six years later we were forced to counter with the Warsaw Pact. We lived under this pressure of the arms race and the danger of war until 1985. Until common sense triumphed and we began to halt this madness: They create a new missile, we create one; they arm themselves, we do not lag behind.

"I am profoundly convinced that our peace initiatives after 1985—not only appeals but, above all, practical actions—pulled the world out of that military rut leading to the abyss," the general emphasized. "And what has happened in Budapest today is a very important historical step toward strengthening peace and security. We are destroying the interbloc relationship—this is the point."

Yes, the Warsaw Pact has given us decades of peace, and that is the chief gain of all postwar development. And, with the assertion of the policy of new thinking and the new modus operandi, there is growing understanding of the fact that the military structures of the military-political alliances, including the Warsaw Pact, become obsolete at the new stage of European development. All this is so. However, how can we fail to agree with the idea which was also aired at the extraordinary Political Consultative Committee session in Budapest: We cannot yet claim that guarantees of the irreversibility of the positive changes in the world have already been secured and that the threat of acute conflict situations has been totally eliminated.

"The Warsaw Pact and NATO countries have declared that they do not consider themselves potential enemies," Army General P.G. Lushev, USSR first deputy defense minister and commander in chief of the Warsaw Pact Joint Armed Forces, said. "I very much hope that this fundamental point will be reflected in the military doctrine and strategy of the North Atlantic alliance, where no radical changes are yet to be observed, although there is talk of this.

"The path to the creation of a new European security system will not be simple and easy, particularly as Europe's vital interests will evidently be decided not only within its borders," Army General Lushev continued. "This is borne out by the emergence of dangerous new 'hot spots,' such as the Persian Gulf, for example. It is no secret that the groupings of U.S. troops and their allies were created in the Persian Gulf zone mainly by transferring personnel and combat hardware from Europe. Therefore, now that the established mechanisms for ensuring security are beginning to disappear and new ones have not yet been created on the scale of the European space, it is evidently necessary to take a highly responsible approach to ensuring the security of every state. Consequently, the Warsaw Pact states' decision to abolish the military structures obviously does not mean that our countries must automatically cease to be partners."

At present we can only make suppositions about the nature of this partnership—it could be formed on a bilateral basis, or new forms could emerge. But it is clear that what is not foreseen is the creation of any alternative regional military-political structures in central and southeast Europe, because that, as was noted at the Political Consultative Committee conference, would destabilize the strategic situation in Europe and pose in the long term the danger of a return to the prewar situation of military-political rivalry. However, this is what I reflect on. Was it by chance that my foreign colleagues at the news conference held in Budapest asked the question: What will fill the "vacuum" which has arisen? What is this? The inertia of the old thinking—if one alliance is dismantled, its place must be taken by a new one? Or does something different lie behind this?

I flew to Budapest after the Moscow rally on Manezhnaya Square, where alarm was voiced at the "collapse" of the Warsaw Pact. These feelings are quite understandable: If anyone, it is the Soviet taxpayer who, more than anyone, has invested his "hard-earned money" in strengthening the socialist countries' collective security. "So," workers said to me, "was it all in vain? Because

NATO remains, and look how active it is being." What my interlocutors had in mind was the war in the Persian Gulf, where new hardware and weapons are essentially being tested in combat and experience of operating in modern warfare is being gained. People also asked whether there are any guarantees that our Warsaw Pact allies will not transfer to NATO, since a change of positions and sympathies already exists in the economic sphere.

Another question—about the level of military potentials. Now that the Warsaw Pact organization no longer exists, it is fair to compare these between NATO and the USSR, and so our country is beginning to lose out on this plane. Let us take conventional armed forces in Europe, the treaty on which was signed in Paris 19 November last year. The USSR will be left with 13,150 tanks, and NATO with 20,000, and the corresponding figures will be 20,000 and 30,000 for armored combat vehicles, 13,175 and 20,000 for artillery systems, 1,500 and 2,000 for strike helicopters, etc. The figures are eloquent—there is something to ponder on here.

Everything passed off routinely in Budapest; at least, I did not sense any special enthusiasm or elation among the participants in the Political Consultative Committee session in the atmosphere prevailing there. It took the Soviet delegation leaders precisely three minutes—from 1219 through 1222 local time—to sign the final document. They were the last three minutes in almost 36 years of existence.

Warsaw Pact Military Dissolution Viewed

PM0103102991 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 27 Feb 91 p 3

[Report by correspondent A. Kaverznev: "Sentence on Treaty Passed in Budapest by Former East European Allies"]

[Text] Budapest—The Warsaw Pact military organization no longer exists. The day before yesterday an extraordinary session of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee was held in Budapest. At the session documents were signed providing for the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact's military organs and structures by 31 March. They were signed on the Soviet side by Foreign Minister A. Bessmertnykh and Defense Minister D. Yazov. What was essentially an epoch-making event passed in an entirely workaday manner.

In the middle of the day a taxi stood outside the "Duna Intercontinental" hotel where the signing ceremony was to be held 30 minutes later. On the roof rack were two wreaths. Pure coincidence. Probably someone had died in a nearby house and people were preparing for the funeral. But my journalist colleagues immediately grasped the symbolism: "Look, they have made wreaths for the Warsaw Pact." That is not humor, but nonetheless I cannot entirely share my colleagues' tone. It is only the Warsaw Pact's military structures which are dying away. The organization itself is retained, in a qualitatively transformed form it is true—as a purely political structure of a consultative nature.

It was expected that the Warsaw Pact's supreme organ—the Political Consultative Committee, whose session was planned for the end of November last year but was repeatedly deferred—would approve the abolition of the military structure. One reason for the deferments was the reluctance to aggravate the already heated atmosphere in the USSR. We know that far from all our fellow citizens approve of the elimination of the Warsaw Pact military structures, seeing in this act the undermining of the bulwark of peace and socialism. Our partners initially treated the USSR's requests with understanding, but in January they started to say that the Political Consultative Committee conference should be convened before the end of February or early March at the very latest. They reckoned on agreeing on the military organization's dissolution as of 1 July. This was stated in particular at a news conference by the Hungarian, Polish, and Czechoslovak foreign ministers, who met in Budapest in January. Otherwise, they warned, even without the USSR's participation we shall state our withdrawal from the military organization. This position was supported by the Bulgarian Government. There were no objections from Romania. It could be expected that the Hungarian, Polish, and Czechoslovak leaders, whose meeting in Visegrad was planned for mid-February, would announce their intentions officially during the meeting. It is superfluous to speak of the possible political consequences of such a demarche for our country.

But a week before the Visegrad meeting the leaders of the allied states received a message from M.S. Gorbachev in which the Soviet president suggested convening the Political Consultative Committee at defense and foreign minister level and as early as February and formulating the decision to abolish the Warsaw Pact military structure as of 1 April. The Soviet initiative met with support.

Thus the documents have been signed and the decision has been taken. The Warsaw Pact Joint Armed Forces and Joint Command are being abolished. What next? The confrontation between the two military blocs has receded into the past but the all-European home has not yet been constructed. Will we succeed in safeguarding security on the continent in this transitional period? Especially as it is not free of collisions and arguments. And in each of our countries the processes of renewal are not proceeding painlessly.

The following question also arises: On their path into Europe will the present Warsaw Pact members not cross over to NATO? Hungary was the first to become an associate member of the North Atlantic Assembly. Of course, contacts between representatives of the two blocs help the consolidation of mutual trust, but closer ties could disrupt European stability. The opinion has been voiced even from Washington that in the foreseeable

future it is preferable for the East European countries to advance toward neutrality rather than join the other bloc.

Incidentally, the abolition of the military structures by no means that any military cooperation between our countries will cease. In a recent interview with the newspaper NEPSZABADSAG, Hungarian Defense Minister L. Fur made it clear that Hungary is seeking to transfer cooperation with the Soviet Union to a new basis. The minister said that his country proposes to conclude a bilateral agreement with the USSR. According to the Hungarian side's design, the agreement would have a beneficial effect on stability in the region and would guarantee the Hungarian army deliveries of military equipment and spare parts from the USSR.

In this case the Hungarian minister's proposal is only a partial example. The perestroyka of the entire system of mutual relations between the East European countries is under way. New inter-state treaties are being elaborated which, it must be supposed, will stipulate guarantees of mutual security.

Correspondent Views Warsaw Pact Demise

LD0303101891 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0800 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] [Announcer] If you discount what is going on in the Persian Gulf, the most important happening of the past week has probably been the meeting held by the Warsaw Pact's Political Consultative Committee [PCC] in Budapest. Our special correspondent Viktor Levin went there to cover this event. He is now sitting beside me here in the studio. Viktor Nikolayevich, you have the freshest impressions. We do know something of the meeting of the PCC, gleaned not just from the TASS reports and the press, but also from your reports. So, what are your impressions?

[Levin] My impressions are that, of course the initial reaction has been fairly gloomy. After all, we had the Warsaw Pact and it had a military organization, but now the military organization no longer exists. And judging by the tone of the press conference held immediately after the PCC meeting, the Warsaw Pact has one foot in the grave as a political body, too. All the indications are that it has not long to live.

[Announcer] You know, in recent days we have been receiving lots of letters and telephone calls from our listeners. The gist of them is roughly this: Here we are disarming unilaterally, and now even our military organization—the Warsaw Pact—our hope, our support, our shield has ceased to exist. All sorts of misgivings are to be heard on this score.

[Levin] These misgivings are shallow, so to speak. If you think about it, well, I have no intention of dramatizing the situation, and moreover I am profoundly convinced that the Warsaw Pact—today we are speaking of the military organization of the Warsaw Pact—died a natural and very timely death. Let us not neglect the indisputable fact that the alliance as it existed within the pact was basically an alliance of rider and horse. The difference was that there were several horses, but only one rider. It was this sense of domination—strong domination—by the Soviet Union that has generated such a stormy, negative reaction in the countries of East Europe. It would be totally unacceptable to them to see this sort of alliance perpetuated. This is a fact of life that cannot be disregarded.

Incidentally, in Budapest it was very heartening to hear a similar opinion from the lips of Marshal Yazov, our defense minister, even though just the day before, on Soviet Army Day, I had read the opinions of our pre-eminent military commanders in a number of newspapers. They were full of concern and even suggested that NATO platoons would soon be pressing on our borders! I am quite sure that they will do no such thing. The roots of our cooperation—I might even say that roots of our friendship—run very deep. This cannot be discounted by those leaders of some East European countries who today consider their main task to be to distance themselves as far as possible from the Soviet Union.

[Announcer] You know, I have encountered instances of the media in, say,- Poland occasionally floating the idea that Poland will not just pull out of the Warsaw Pact, but will even join NATO. I do see that speculation and serious political intent are two separate things, but is there an actual dividing line between them?

[Levin] Certainly there is a dividing line between irresponsible press speculation and the serious actions of politicians—there is a huge chasm between these concepts.

'Bewilderment' Expressed at Iceland Statement

LD0103163791 Moscow TASS in English 1502 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—It is with bewilderment that the Soviet side received the statement by Iceland's Prime Minister Steingrimur Hermansson on his government's readiness to mediate in talks between the Soviet Union and the Baltic Republics, a spokesman for the Soviet Foreign Ministry told TASS today, commenting on reports by news agencies, including the Danish Ritsaus Bureau.

He recalled that the Baltic Republics are part of the Soviet Union, and stressed that claims to mediation "can only be regarded as attempts to intervene in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union, aimed at undermining its territorial integrity and internationalising problems which are subject to the Soviet Federation's domestic jurisdiction. [No closing quotation mark as received]

This is why, the spokesman said, the Soviet side is compelled to regard the statement by Iceland's prime minister as the continuation of the unacceptable policy which found expression in Iceland's legislature's decision on diplomatic relations with Lithuania.

The spokesman confirmed the Soviet assessment of this policy first expressed in the Soviet Foreign Ministry's note published in the press on February 13.

"As regards conditions for the dialogue between Moscow and Baltic capitals," the spokesman said, "they have been defined. In the second half of 1990, several consultative meetings were held in Moscow with delegations from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and no obstacles to such talks have been set up by the Soviet Government. In accordance with the Soviet president's decrees, new delegations have been formed for talks with each one of the three republics and there are no grounds to suppose that the conditions for the dialogue call for the participation of unasked mediators. [No closing quotation mark as received]

Akhromeyev Interviewed on Gulf, Pact's Demise

PM0403095291 Milan L'UNITA in Italian 28 Feb 91 p 6

[Interview with Gorbachev military adviser Marshal Sergey Akhromeyev by Sergio Sergi; date, place not given]

[Text] Moscow—[Sergi] Marshal, "military instinct," as the Soviet Government put it, has at last prevailed in Iraq. As a military man, how do you judge the situation that has come about?

[Akhromeyev] Obviously I will not say anything against our government's position in this regard. I support our foreign policy, which I consider correct; but I do not consider that reference to "instinct" very appropriate, because we are dealing with the position of a superpower—the United States—and you cannot talk in terms of instincts. The U.S. Administration is composed of pragmatists, and the most important thing for them are state interests; and if an extension of the scale of the war had not been in their national interests, the war would not have been stepped up with the ground offensive.

Of course, the armed forces of the United States and the other states gathered in the Middle East to carry out the Security Council's decisions, to halt Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. If this were the United States' only aim, I believe it should have accepted our president's proposal. After all, Iraq did agree to leave Kuwait unconditionally. There were perhaps one or two days left to agree on the details of the withdrawal. But it refused and set the military initiative in motion. Obviously there were other reasons why events should have taken this turn, rather than another.

[Sergi] Do you believe that America's rejection of the "Soviet peace plan" is due to the desire to prevent the USSR from scoring a positive achievement on the international plane?

[Akhromeyev] I would not say that this is the crucial factor. When I talk about other "interests" I do not believe that this was the actual reason that set the military operations in motion. There were other, evidently stronger, reasons behind the offensive...

[Sergi] ...But, may I ask you: Would a "turnabout" have given a new boost to the USSR's image...

[Akhromeyev] This certainly is an issue. But it is not the crucial factor.

[Sergi] What if the United States decides to go as far as Baghdad? The Soviet side has already said that we are now facing a "qualitatively new" situation.

[Akhromeyev] If this did happen, it would be a direct violation of the Security Council decisions, and in that case the Americans would be acting on their own initiative, with all the consequences deriving from it. But I believe that they will not do it. At least, that is what I think now.

[Sergi] But has the UN mandate been overstepped or not?

[Akhromeyev] Look, there are various degrees of overstepping, because war is war, and in a war you cannot measure things in inches or pounds. An overstepping definitely has occurred, but I do not know whether it was deliberate. It is a result of the rationale of war. But if something very different happens, then there will be a clear violation.

[Sergi] What worries you more—a strengthening of the U.S. role in the world or a demise of the so-called "new world order?"

[Akhromeyev] Before the conflict I hoped that it would be possible to create a global security system, by reaching an agreement first among the principal states and then all the rest. In other words, a mechanism for averting events such as those in the Persian Gulf. And also to continue creating a system of security in Europe based on the accords signed in Paris. Even if the events in the Gulf have not undermined all this, they have nevertheless done much harm, and many issues will have to be tackled again from scratch. This is very sad.

[Sergi] PRAVDA has stated that the war was in fact desired, in order to assert America's preeminence in the world.

[Akhromeyev] I believe that PRAVDA was talking about something which is actually taking place, from a certain viewpoint.

[Sergi] Some newspapers are criticizing the Kremlin for immediately adhering to the anti-Iraq alliance, against a country to which it is bound by a friendship treaty.

[Akhromeyev] I cannot agree with this, because if we argued before 2 August that there was a possibility of creating a global security system, this was based primarily on the agreement of the United States and the USSR. And if the Soviet Union had not accepted the assessment concerning the aggression and adhered to the decisions on sanctions, it would have been responsibile for burying this system. It was a matter of principle, a very important matter that concerned the further development of international relations. The USSR acted correctly at that time.

[Sergi] It is also said that the USSR is gradually yielding to the West's pressures.

[Akhromeyev] Pardon me, but this question belongs to the "old thinking..."

[Sergi] Actually I read it in SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA.

[Akhromeyev] I see. That is a newspaper that I like very much, but in this instance I cannot agree with it. You cannot pursue one policy with one hand and another policy with the other. A country such as the USSR must have a clear and well-defined policy.

[Sergi] Is there a fear in military circles of a possible weakening of the USSR?

[Akhromeyev] Unfortunately, this is so. But this is a result more of internal political events than of foreign political events.

[Sergi] I have also read that the USSR has accepted a whole series of agreements on military cuts on the European theater, but meanwhile the Americans will be able to continue to do what they want at home, far from the Old Continent. But the USSR is part of Europe....

[Akhromeyev] Perhaps when the USSR signed the agreements (and when it signs others, like the one on the reduction of offensive strategic weapons) it was in the dark about the geographical location of the USSR and the United States? Everything was well known. The decisions were made after detailed discussions. The USSR's new foreign policy was formulated in 1986, after being worked on jointly for a long time by the political, diplomatic, military, and economic leadership. By everybody. It was formulated, discussed, approved, and then implementation was started.

[Sergi] None of those mentioned went back on it?

[Akhromeyev] Do individuals count? You mean that some leaders have gone, but that is natural. However, the policy as it was drawn up then is the right one and is being implemented in an equally correct way. Have there been mistakes? Yes. There have been mistakes by leadership members, but the policy itself is the right one. With regard to Europe, I think that the main states in Europe welcomed our policy and are still working in that direction. I have not lost hope for positive results in the future although major problems have arisen. However, no great enterprise is ever achieved without complications.

[Sergi] For instance, the end of the Warsaw Pact was signed the other day. Do you have fears now?

[Akhromeyev] I am no youngster, I fought in World War II, and the Pact was created by other people; at that stage I did not have a very high rank. Later I played an active part in that organization's work. From a human viewpoint I am disappointed that it has gone but at the same time, as a military leader, I took part in the formulation of the USSR's foreign policy and military doctrine, and I think that this is the logical conclusion of that foreign policy. It was no accident. Although it pains me, I understand that it is a legitimate event. There is now one question: What does NATO think of that?

[Sergi] I was about to ask you that.

[Akhromeyev] I do not give orders to NATO but I can say one thing to it: If the military alliance against which NATO was formed no longer exists, what is the purpose of NATO? Nobody is giving a clear answer to that question. They are talking vaguely about an alleged instability in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union. And it is against this "instability" which NATO is acting. However, this is not serious. The European peoples, including the Italians, should think about it and decide.

[Sergi] The 17 March referendum will determine the USSR's future. What will happen if the majority vote against the country's unity?

[Akhromeyev] The Army will honor any decision within observance of the Constitution. There can be no interference with the voting results. As long as the supreme state institutions remain, there is no question of the Army's being able to interfere in their activities.

[Sergi] Does the danger of a fragmentation of the USSR's nuclear strength have a bearing on the appeals against the USSR's disintegration?

[Akhromeyev] I believe that such a theory should be ruled out. Our strategic nuclear weapons are deployed in three republics—Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. The tactical nuclear weapons are held by the Army, and local authorities have nothing to do with them from any viewpoint.

[Sergi] When could the U.S.-USSR summit take place?

[Akhromeyev] When the war ends we will have to look around us. It is difficult to say now. Everything must be reappraised. The war has already had an impact on the summit. The problems shelved because of the war must return to the forefront. For one thing, the START treaty is virtually ready.

NATO Perception of Pact Disbandment Eyed

PM0103114991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Feb 91 Union Edition p 5

[F. Lukyanov report: "Warsaw Treaty Passes Into History; and NATO? Toward Europe Without Blocs"]

[Text] Budapest—On Monday 25 February the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee began an extraordinary meeting at foreign and defense minister level in the Hungarian capital. Judging by the agenda, the sides are due to sign a document at this meeting that will disband this military-political alliance.

Scarcely anyone, even given a completely different attitude toward what is happening in the Hotel Duna-Intercontinental, situated in downtown Budapest on the bank of a Danube still shrouded in wintry gloom, will contest all the significance of this event, to which no less attention is being paid than to the latest upheavals in the war in the Persian Gulf. This is confirmed if only by the reinforcement posse of journalists who have been arriving in the last few days from all over the world to augment the permanent corps of their colleagues. Indeed, it is not every day that structures like the Warsaw Pact or the NATO military organization are formed, nor is it everyday that they disband.

Born as they were in the era of the postwar "great confrontation," in the heyday, as is the custom to say nowadays, of bloc thinking (NATO was born in 1949 and then, in response, the Warsaw Pact was born in 1955), it seemed only a few years ago that these two military-political alliances—which in time became the most important factors in the global balance of power—would long remain in a static position, or, to be more exact, in a state of confrontation.

It will be no revelation to say that the changes began in 1985 with the beginning of perestroyka in the Soviet Union. The new wave of East-West detente which was the consequence of the policy of "new thinking" proclaimed in Moscow; the intensive disarmament negotiations and the first agreement on arms reductions; the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan; the cooperation between the USSR and the United States, the two superpowers, in the settlement of regional conflicts—all this and much more facilitated the lowering of the level of confrontation. Finally, there emerged the idea—once more proposed by the Soviet Union—of the simultaneous disbandment of the two military-political blocs and the gradual formation of a new bloc-free system of security in Europe on the basis of the Helsinki process, the first step toward which was the signing of the Paris Charter late last year.

However, as the events of recent months have shown, the process of "dismantling Europe's blocs" has taken a turn that was for many people somewhat unexpected, to put it bluntly, in its precipitateness. Instead of a gradual "scenario," parallel for both blocs, to which Moscow obviously gave its preference, it came about that strong centrifugal tendencies began to be observed primarily inside the Warsaw Pact, whereas NATO at this time remained fairly static. The "change of systems" which followed the peaceful revolutions in Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and soon in Bulgaria also, and the unification of Germany, with the disappearance of one of the members of the Warsaw Pact—the GDR—objectively strengthened the centrifugal tendencies in the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

Moreover, it must be borne in mind that there came to power in the countries of East Europe those very forces—or the people who directly inspired them—who, first in Hungary in 1956, then in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and to some extent in Poland in 1980 had had, let us say, experience of confrontation with the military structures of the Warsaw Pact. This circumstance by no means strengthened their goodwill toward this same Warsaw Treaty military organization after they had come to power, and, in their words, did not add to their feelings of security. Bearing this in mind it is easier to understand the motives and the precipitateness with which the former members of the Warsaw Pact hurried to secede from the alliance's military organization.

In this situation Moscow was presented with a fait accompli, and only the initiative aimed at disbanding the military organization before 1 April this year which the USSR president made in response enabled him to seize the initiative to some extent. But it has become clear that in NATO too the pace of the changes in the Warsaw Pact is causing alarm and unease, threatening as it does the destabilization of the situation in this region. Especially in view of the fact that many of the initiators of the disbandment of the Warsaw Pact are at the same time making no secret of their intention to integrate into Western structures that are more kindred to them in spirit, including the political and military organizations of NATO.

Of course, it cannot be denied that the situation is an extremely tricky one for both Moscow and for NATO. It seems that the state of affairs that has arisen is being viewed more farsightedly in Washington and Brussels than by the East European claimants to admission to the North Atlantic alliance. There is now clear evidence of an attempt by the West to persuade the East European countries not to take rash steps that threaten serious complications for relations with the USSR, and to opt not for NATO membership but for neutrality.

An official spokesman of the Washington administration recently stated that the United States believes that neutrality on the Austrian or Finnish model of nonmembership in NATO would be the most expedient policy for the countries of East Europe for the foreseeable future. "It must be admitted that the Soviet Union has legitimate security interests, and it would hardly accept the creation of something like a Little Entente or a cordon sanitaire, as existed in the twenties, along its Western borders," the Washington spokesman noted in an interview to [Hungary's] MTI agency. "The minimum that the USSR would agree to—and this would be accepted by the West—would be a 'buffer zone of neutral countries'."

It would appear that in Brussels, the NATO capital, it is also understood that a premature dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, a kind of down payment by the East to the West, poses several questions for NATO also. For the time being, in the words of NATO General Secretary M. Woerner, the North Atlantic alliance does not intend to disband and will continue its activity, although it does not need the image of the enemy for this purpose. "Soviet fears vis-a-vis the preservation of NATO are unfounded," Woerner stated last week. "NATO does not threaten anybody. We are building bilateral relations with the USSR and are extending it the hand of friendship; we wish to build relations of partnership with the Soviet Union. Our aim is not to threaten the USSR; on the contrary we wish to build together with the Soviet Union the architecture of a new European security which will include all the nations of the continent."

No Reason Seen For NATO 'Immortality'

PM0403112991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 Mar 91 First Edition p 6

["View from Moscow" by Vladislav Drobkov: "NATO Is Not Immortal Either"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] I do not know whether inertia of thinking or something else is to blame, but the news that for the first time since the great Victory the Soviet Union has no military allies in Europe, is causing a certain amount of anxiety. I think that I am not the only one to feel this. This anxiety is compounded by the fact that the West is not only in no hurry to follow the East's example and dismantle the NATO military organization, but is now, on the contrary, actively and persistently looking for ways to justify the need for its further preservation and even its strengthening as the now sole guarantor of peace and stability in the Old World. As NATO Secretary General M. Woerner put it, commenting on the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact military organization, the need to preserve the North Atlantic Alliance remains. It is allegedly needed as a prop to shore up the new all-European security system and as an instrument for averting crises.

The legitimate question arises: Can a Western military structure alone provide a firm prop? Would it not be more sensible to continue more actively to seek solutions for establishing an independent, nonbloc all-European security system which would rely on military detente and confidence-building measures and mutual reductions of arms and armed forces rather than a deterrent arsenal?

I am also seriously alarmed by the fact that in this situation, despite the unquestionable thaw in the international climate and the strengthening of good-neighborliness in Europe, our country still features, even in the new North Atlantic Alliance doctrines which are only just being elaborated, as the main potential threat. With the reservation, it is true, that this threat stems merely from the instability of the situation in our country, rather than from Soviet aggressiveness. However, in my opinion, such a reservation does not change the essence of the matter. Since NATO favors the preservation of its military machine for the sake of the neutralization of this "threat," it would be interesting to know how it plans to counter it in practice. By means of arms?

I believe that the principles, proclaimed in the Paris charter for a new Europe, of the impermissibility of the use of force or the threat of the use of force against any of the CSCE participant states, call into question the idea of the preservation of one military grouping while its rival is being dismantled.

In my opinion, the U.S. military presence in Europe which is being upheld by NATO also becomes nonsensical in the longer term. The problem of U.S. bases appears in a completely new light. Metaphorically speaking, at the funeral of the Cold War in Paris history's death knell tolled both for military blocs and also for foreign bases in Europe. But has everyone heard it?

Reflecting on the future geometry of military ties in the continent of Europe, it is impossible to overlook the desire of certain of our former allies to expand their links with NATO. Although none of the member-countries of the Warsaw Pact has as yet declared that it wants to join the North Atlantic bloc (provided, of course, you do not count the absorption by the Bundeswehr of part of the army of the former GDR as such), I would not rule out such a prospect. What can this lead to? To a new "Entente," which would eye the "unstable USSR" if not with hostility, then with caution and suspicion? But then, may we not end up again in the trenches of a new Cold War instead of in our common European home?

The dismantling of the Warsaw Pact military organization may influence many of the processes currently under way in Europe. Take the Vienna talks, for example, which are being conducted within the framework of the two blocs, one of which is ceasing to exist. Nor can the impact of this event on the fate of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe, which was signed in November of last year in Paris, be ruled out. For the first time in history, this truly unprecedented document stipulates a substantial reduction of the military might of the Warsaw Pact and NATO—the blocs which are confronting each other in Europe. And although the forces of the Warsaw Pact, and especially of the Soviet Union, are subject to substantially greater cuts under this document than NATO troops and arms, it was possible until as recently as yesterday to justify this sacrifice with the overall balance that was maintained between the two alliances.

However, with the elimination of the Warsaw Pact military structure, this balance is clearly being disrupted, and by no means in favor of the USSR. The document signed in Paris has not yet been ratified either by our Supreme Soviet, or the legislatures of most of the other states which signed it, and the principles of the balance of two groupings' might, on which it is based, essentially no longer apply. It follows that in the absence of the Warsaw Pact military structures there will be no one with whom NATO needs to seek parity...

The new situation also makes it necessary to take a new look at other "stumbling blocks" of the European disarmament process. So, the Soviet Union is being cricitized more and more loudly in the West for concealing the true scale of its military might in Europe which is subject to reduction under the Paris Treaty. Our military is being rebuked for the recent transfer beyond the Urals of thousands of tanks which, had they stayed in Europe, would have had to be melted down. And for the transfer to the Navy of three ground force divisions which would have had to be cut otherwise.

However, simultaneously even many of our Western critics admit that formally these measures do not run counter to the treaty. Especially since they began to be implemented prior to the signing of the Paris accords, and NATO staffs were aware of them. The only thing that is important is that when the agreements come legally into force, the cuts to the agreed levels are implemented. As far as I know, no one has as yet opposed this. So who deserves to be rebuked more—our military, who have reacted in their own way to the prospect of the unfavorable change in the situation in Europe as regards the overall balance, or the diplomats, ours and the West's, who drew up a treaty, which has partly lost its basis even before it has been ratified?

Incidentally, it would hardly be right to blame anyone for lack of foresight or even mistakes made in the course of the turbulent and dramatic development of the situation in the European continent. What has happened is history now, and it makes no sense to argue with history. It would be more productive, in my opinion, to try calmly and in a well-weighed manner to determine the future course of action. The Paris charter for a new Europe provides the necessary scope for embarking on the creation in the continent of a fundamentally new system of collective security which would guarantee the legitimate interests of all countries and make it possible to reduce the vast resources allocated for military needs.

The all-European collective security system must be precisely what its title implies, but not only in name, and it must include all the CSCE participants without discrimination. Since we are on the subject, it should be mentioned that the Soviet Union too is concerned at the "instability" of the development of the situation in some neighboring countries and the turbulent processes which are under way there. However, we have stated unequivocally from the outset that these processes are the internal affair of sovereign peoples and any intervention is impermissible. And we have not called for strengthening the Warsaw Pact military structure, just in case.

Let's be realistic. The simultaneous dismantling of the two military-political groupings in Europe, for which we have called more than once, has not taken place. It will hardly be possible in the near future to transform them into predominantly political structures. No matter what the NATO military and political leaders may be saying at the moment, the organization which was set up at the time to contain and even roll back Communism, simply cannot be adapted to its new and different aims overnight. It remains to be hoped that this relic of Cold War will gradually die away in the unfavorable atmosphere of the absence of a real threat. After all, SEATO [Southeast Asia Treaty Organization] passed away at the time, albeit for different reasons. Other military-political alliances have also fallen apart. Consequently I see no reason for NATO's immortality.

The disintegration of the Warsaw Pact military structures has thrown up another question: How are we to build our own defensive strategy in the new situation. I will refrain from offering detailed advice to the Ministry of Defense—every Tom, Dick, and Harry is trying to advise it at the moment from all kind of rostrums. I will confine myself to this: Might it not be worthwhile to take a look at the French model of "defense on all azimuths" dating back to the break between Paris and the NATO military organization? Naturally, there can be no question of copying specific dostrines, but it should be possible to find useful elements in other people's experience...

Finally, the last point. Although the elimination of the Warsaw Pact military organization introduces a certain imbalance in the European strategic equation, this should not fill us with excessive alarm. The situation in the continent has changed substantially for the better, thanks, incidentally, not least to the constructive policy of the USSR and other former Warsaw Pact member-countries. No one is expecting war in Europe, and let's hope that no one wants it either. Thus it should be

possible to weather the present disruption of the East-West military parity with relative calm. Provided, of course, that it is not exacerbated by militarist efforts on the part of NATO.

As for our own security, it seems to me that it should be possible to maintain it at the requisite level, regrouping the forces and means released from the task of defending our allies.

Girenko Meets Socialist International Group

LD2803221891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1455 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow, 28 Feb (TASS)—A meeting took place today between Andrey Girenko, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and the delegation of the Socialist International which is concluding its stay in the Soviet Union.

Issues relating to interethnic relations in our country, including the ones brought to light by the delegation's trip to the Soviet Baltic republics, were discussed in the course of the conversation.

'Hijackers' Extradited From Bulgaria, Finland

LD0203000291 Moscow TASS in English 1839 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—In accordance with previous agreements, Bulgarian and Finnish authorities extradited Soviet hijackers, KGB Public Relations Centre announced today.

Soviet citizen A. Vilesov was handed over to Soviet authorities by Finnish officials at the Trofianovka border crossing point near Vyborg on February 28. Vilesov hijacked a TU-134 airliner to Finland on November 15, 1990.

On March 1, Soviet citizen G. Gan was brought from Varna to Moscow. On January 21 he hijacked a plane en route from Tashkent to Odessa.

Both hijackers will soon be tried in court.

Near East & South Asia

UN Representative on Security Council Resolution

LD0303051391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0410 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] United Nations, 3 Mar (TASS)—Speaking at the UN Security Council, the USSR represenative stressed the need to exclude the possibility of resuming military operations in the Persian Gulf and described the United Nation's subsequent tasks in the postwar restructuring of the region.

The first addition to the report of the UN Security Council resolution is:

"The UN Security Council has approved a resolution on settling the crisis in the Persian Gulf."

Stopping military operations in the Persian Gulf region is a major and important event in the international situation, Yuliy Vorontsov, USSR permanent representative at the United Nations, said during a UN Security Council meeting. The Soviet Union warmly welcomes the liberation of the State of Kuwait, the restoration of its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, as well as the return of its legitimate government.

Ending the military conflict resulted from the collective efforts of every state that took part in seeking a settlement—states that united in an effort to restore the thwarted rights of an entire people and tried to prevent one country from seizing another. Many states, including the Soviet Union, the United States, and other coalition members, among which there are many Arab and Muslim states, took part in bringing about this historic precedent. From the very start of the crisis the Soviet Union was resolutely in favor of seeking an optimum solution to the problem primarily through peaceful means. USSR President M.S. Gorbachev was consistently constructing our diplomatic stance along these lines, including his very active contacts with leaders of all the principal states involved in the crisis. Our country has done a great deal to stop military operations and avoid further bloodshed.

A number of priorities are emerging now, the Soviet representative noted. First, a resumption of military operations should be averted completely. The resolution that has just been adopted by the Security Council is aimed at solving precisely this most urgent task. In the near future, the Security Council will have to explore the issues of final political settlement of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti conflict and the elimination of the consequences of Iraq's aggression in depth. The international community also faces the task of starting to develop a postcrisis arrangement in the region without delay. The creation of a security system that not only will draw a line for the recent events but will also guarantee against military conflicts in the future must be a most important element of this. The Persian Gulf's security structure must be founded primarily on the interests of all the states in the region. It is absolutely natural that the United Nations, the Security Council, and its permanent members should be involved in creating this system. The events of the last few months have again sharply shown that the world community must undertake the most resolute efforts for convening an international peace conference on the Near East. Such a forum will make it possible to guarantee long-lasting peace and security to the whole region. Yuliy Vorontsov stressed the need to solve the Palestinian question as soon as possible and to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Churkin Interviewed on Diplomacy in Mideast

LD0103183991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1530 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Studio interview with Vitaliy Ivanovich Churkin, head of the USSR Foreign Ministry Information Directorate, by announcer Tsvetov on 1 March; from the "Meridian" program—recorded]

[Text] [Tsvetov] Vitaliy Ivanovich, what has Soviet diplomacy achieved and what it has failed to achieve during the six months of the crisis in the Near East?

[Churkin] I think the main thing is that we have found enough courage to show in practice that we really are members of the international community. I say courage, for this was not a simple decision, because the country that appeared in the role of an aggressor is the country with which we have maintained broad contacts for a number of years, and toward whose people we felt, and still feel, genuine respect.

The second most important task we accomplished—and we are rather proud of this—is that from 2 August, the safety of the Soviet people who were in Kuwait and Iraq during that period was ensured. I remind you that there were around 8,500 of them. Despite all the complications, we were able to evacuate all of them.

The third task which, as I believe, we have accomplished successfully, consisted in keeping open the communication channels with all the sides involved in the conflict to use all the available means—and create such means—for the political, peaceful settlement of the crisis. I remind you that during all these months, and until the last hour of the war, we also kept up contacts with the Iraqi side. Our embassy, comprising 13 officials, and headed by the ambassador, remained in Baghdad even after the beginning of the military actions. The embassy continued to function efficiently, which required a lot of courage and a high level of professionalism from the Soviet people. I think we were very close to demonstrating that even in such an extremely complicated situation, diplomacy is able to play its part—you remember the Gorbachev plan, which, incidentally, was highly regarded by the leaders of many countries.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to make full use of diplomacy. I think the Iraqi side was mainly to blame for

this because the Iraqis wasted too much time. Nevertheless, I repeat that the Soviet Union's efforts were duly appreciated by the majority of countries and the majority of politicians.

I think the main achievement of these months is the ability of the international community to create a united front against the aggression. I do not want to draw up straight historical parallels, but I think that if we had been able to create such a front in 1938- 39 our country and the other peoples might have avoided the tragedy that all of us remember from history or—as the elder generation still remembers it—from their own experiences connected with the second world war.

[Tsvetov] Judging from what you have said, a lot has been done. The cease-fire has been announced; however, the war has not yet formally ended. What is next?

[Churkin] Now, it seems, international and Soviet diplomacy are facing four major tasks. First, it is necessary to do everything to ensure that the military actions do not restart. Second, consultations aimed at drawing up the formal, official, international, and legal conclusion of the war have opened in the United Nations Security Council among its permanent members, including the Soviet Union, which is playing its part. Third, a security structure in the Persian Gulf, which would guarantee that such situations will not arise in the future, is to be created. Fourth, an enourmous and very important task that occupies a high place on the Soviet foreign policy agenda is work on a global Near East settlement: In other words, solving the old Arab-Israeli problem.

Reports, Commentaries Review Postwar Situation

Postwar Diplomacy Examined

PM0103223591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Mar 91 Union Edition p 5

[V. Nadein report: "Is One Victory Enough for Everyone?"]

[Text] Washington—The United States has won a victory, a brilliant victory. In an era of omnipotent electronics there is no point in rechecking the figures produced by the military statisticians, who claim that there has never been a war in history in which the victors sustained such moderate damage, while inflicting such dreadful losses on a numerically superior enemy.

Well, it was a U.S. war and, consequently, a U.S. victory, even the U.S. allies acknowledge this. The U.S. is not stinting in sharing out the victor's laurels with its allies either. There seem to be enough to go round now, at this moment of long-awaited, deserved triumph.

But what about tomorrow?

Yesterday the allies' numerical strength seemed a tremendous advantage for the coalition. Yesterday their diversity was considered exclusively a technical problem of communication.

Diplomacy, which, for six weeks, accorded the guns the right to the deciding voice, is once again taking up its direct responsibilities. U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker, who received a short 100 hours off during the ground war, is heading for the Near East on Monday on a mission whose main difficulty is that very many people expect a very great deal from it.

The President has announced that the secretary of state's task is to prepare new agreements on security and economic reconstruction in the Persian Gulf region after the war. It sounds simple but, considering the region's troublesome reputation, the secretary of state will envy Defense Secretary R. Cheney time and again. The latter had General N. Schwarzkopf performing a flanking maneuver that people are saying will go down in the military textbooks. Diplomatic blitzkriegs, however, do not take place with allies, much less with friends.

Having disproved the—it must be said—extremely large number of analysts who saw the war ending only with the occupation of Baghdad and the physical annihilation of Saddam Husayn, President G. Bush displayed moderation and realism, but that was not all. He has laid a convenient springboard for subsequent diplomatic maneuvers in an Arab world that takes a guarded view of the U.S. victory. At a time when victors are often dazzled by their own triumph, the U.S. President did not overlook the diplomatic mines with which the apparently open road to Saddam Husayn's residence is littered. "There are a number of weighty reasons why we should not seek to put Saddam Husayn on trial," THE NEW YORK TIMES wrote on Wednesday. "A weak Saddam Husayn at the head of a functioning Iraq may be preferable to a sacrificial Saddam Husayn uniting dissatisfied Arabs everywhere with his pitiful destiny. We can deal with any remaining threat to peace that he may pose by the threat of retribution and various embargoes, a regional system of security, and disarmament agreements."

This good sense cannot be said to be entirely shared by the administration. Mentioning the hated man by name just once—and in a humiliating context—during his victory address on television, G. Bush left no doubts that the removal of the Iraqi dictator is still the key condition for new relations with the vanquished country.

Most observers are inclined to think that politicians whose plans include the assumption that there is another scenario by which Saddam Husayn could succeed in saving his government have miscalculated. Today the prevalent viewpoint in the mass media is that Saddam represents a totally spent force. Even if the ruthlessness that has saved him so many times in the past does not

fail him for a second, the burden of the crazy adventures that he cannot shrug off will inexorably drag him down nonetheless.

This factor, which was quite recently the focus of debate and doubt, is perhaps increasingly clear today. On the other hand, problems that quite recently seemed transient concerns have been drastically complicated.

Israel won approval from many of the allies for not launching a retaliatory strike in response to Iraq's missile attacks. It was, indeed, probably psychologically difficult for Tel Aviv to be false to a policy that it solemnly proclaimed for decades to be the cornerstone of its relations with its Arab neighbors. For all intents and purposes, however, Israel only refused to do what allied bombers and cruise missiles were doing successfully and tirelessly. The allies simply asked Israel not to crowd the already overcrowded sky with their aircraft.

Should someone be rewarded for not doing something that is inadvisable? During the war when the United States was making every effort to retain its Arab coalition partners' trust, Washington made plenty of promises—ranging from $13 billion in preferential loans to the organization of direct talks with neighbors.

Unlike Israel, whose main virtue in the war is deemed to be its nonparticipation, its Arab neighbors, with a small exception, were directly involved in combat operations. They were involved in liberating the occupied territory from the aggressor, and hardly anyone is entitled to reproach them for wanting to draw a parallel with another occupation of another territory to which UN Security Council resolutions also refer—Israel's occupation of Syrian territory in particular, Syria the United States' war ally.

The talks between President G. Bush and British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd early Wednesday morning took place, as might have been expected, in an atmosphere of total agreement both regarding the problems of the war that was still ongoing at that time and questions of a postwar Near East settlement. Differences were only evident in nuances of their perception of the problems rather than on the problems themselves. Baker, for instance, proposed establishing a new Near East development bank with a view to ironing out the differences between the poor and rich countries in the region. Speaking to reporters after his conversation with his U.S. counterpart, Hurd pointed out that he does not think this necessary and, THE WASHINGTON POST noted, "prefers the impetus for new institutions to come from the Near East countries themselves."

By and large there is no expectation of friction now or in the foreseeable future between these close allies, if you do not count, however, the Britons' whispered claims to just a modest share of the large amount of money that Germany and Japan have already paid out in part and promise to pay the United States soon.

This too has become debatable due to the allies' unforeseeably rapid success in the war that has just ended. Even their own U.S legislators have not been afraid to upset the victorious government with the opinion that the $15-billion account submitted to Capitol Hill is clearly inflated.

The days ahead promise a diplomatic boom in Washington. Heads of government and foreign ministers will stake their claim one after the other to varying amounts of the victor's spoils. Is there enough to go round? Whom does the White House deem worthy of the best share?

Problems of a postwar settlement in the Near East will inevitably render Soviet-U.S. consultations necessary in the near future. In the opinion of most observers here, Moscow made vast efforts to avert a ground conflict. Its proposals, however, were finally produced when Schwarzkopf's troops had already accomplished the riskiest part of their now famous maneuver and only had the defenseless underbelly of southwest Iraq ahead of them.

Nevertheless serious commentaries are warning against the danger of victory euphoria. A characteristic manifestation of this may, in particular, be a desire to force the Soviet Union onto the sidelines of the Near East settlement process. Britain's foreign secretary, in particular, opposed the idea of an immediate Near East peace conference. He said that his government rather inclines to the U.S position that this conference should be held considerably later "if the need arises." This report causes frowns among statesmen not only in Moscow but also in Paris—the capital of one of the most vigorous members of the victorious coalition.

For a number of decades four main forces have operated in the Near East arena creating a stable balance: Israel and its U.S. backer, on the one hand, and the Arab countries bolstered by Soviet might, on the other. This perennial balance has now been upset. Three of the four forces, Israel included, have seen their star wane to varying degrees, whereas one has moved sharply into the ascendant. One cannot doubt that these three will seek opportunities to restore the equilibrium. For this reason observers stress the precarious nature of any calculations based on temporary, transient factors. A stable peace cannot be secured at the expense of the legitimate interests of any of the sides.

Future Mideast Structure Considered

LD0103164891 Moscow TASS in English 1541 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Yuriy Tyssovskiy]

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—The Desert Storm operation in which tens of thousands of humans perished is over. A sense of euphoria which swept the world has not prevented state leaders of a number of countries from beginning to plan the post war restructuring of the Middle East. Everything indicates that this will not be easy.

The Soviet stand in this respect is known. A security system which could avert military conflicts in the region in future should be created in the Gulf zone. The outlines of this system begin to shape, as many media testify. They were prepared in advance by specialists in Moscow and Washington, in Paris and London, in Arab and other capitals. It is desirable that security structures should envisage restrictions on foreign military presence in the region, and grant the central collective role to Arab states and Iran, with involving appropriate U.N. bodies, if needs.

It will, apparenty, be more difficult to organise things in a new way in the Middle East. With all its drama, the Gulf war could not eclipse the unsolved Middle East problems, including the Palestinian one. It highlighted them even more. In these conditions most of Western countries arrived at the consensus that an urgent, comprehensive and principled settlement of these problems would largely help turn the region out of a permanent trouble area into a zone of security and peace. There is, naturally, difference in approaches and methods of achieving this goal. But still the consensus has been reached.

There is, however, a difficult obstacle on this road. Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh said at a news conference on Thursday that "a number of influencial states lack will or readiness to exert political efforts to find the necessary solutions". He apparently meant Israel first of all. Indeed, the statements of Tel Aviv officials indicate that there have been no positive changes in the attitude of the Israeli Government, the Government further to the right wing than any in Israel's history.

In an interview to the French "LE FIGARO" on Friday Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said outright that he will not agree to territorial concessions, "that is, to the restoration of Arab lands occupied in 1967". And Isreali Foreign Minister David Levi urges the United States to exert pressure on Arab countries to make them agree to negotiate on Tel Aviv's terms. The Israeli ruling circles refuse to accept an idea of convening an international Middle East conference.

In this situation, Washington bears a large share of responsibility for the result of efforts towards settling the Middle East problems. How far are the Americans prepared to go in the attempts to take in hand its obstinate "strategic ally"? Many political observers now ponder on this question.

The trip of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to the Middle East will bring some clarity to this matter.

As to the Soviet Union, Bessmertnykh said that "it is determined to get down to the settlement of the Middle East problem, the primary cause of instability in the area, and to address it jointly with Arab countries, with Israel and with all the parties involved in the conflict".

Gulf War Aftermath Considered

LD0103194691 Moscow Radio Peace and Progress in Arabic 1400 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Andrey Vasilyev commentary]

[Text] The war has ended and it ended with disastrous consequences for the Iraqi Army, as was expected; 40 of the 42 divisions present in the theater of operations were destroyed.

British sources have reported that the number of Iraqi prisoners has risen to 175,000 and that about 4,000 tanks were destroyed. This is equivalent to almost the entire Iraqi military capability. No one, however poorly informed about the situation leading up to 15 January—that is the deadline set by the UN resolutions on a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis—can fail to ask: What did Saddam hope to achieve when he embarked on an open military confrontation with the multinational force? By the way, one has to be a specialist to understand that the balance of power was not at all equitable, and that the enemy has tremendous technological superiority over Iraq.

The Iraqi president decided, however, to risk not only the lives of his soldiers, but also those of the civilians who died in the raids. Now that the guns have fallen silent, the voices of diplomacy are raised. Preliminary data indicate that Iraq has accepted all 12 resolutions issued by the UN Security Council on the Arab Gulf. This, of course, gives rise to hope, although one can assume the difficulty of solving many other problems.

It is not necessary to be far sighted to guess that the difficulties arise above all from the fact that Saddam remains in power. John Sununu, White House chief of staff, has announced that the Iraqi people's realization of the losses they have suffered in the war will inevitably lead to radical changes in the country. John Sununu said that every time the present regime seeks to conceal the truth from the people, the people become more aware of what really happened. In this respect, the U.S. official indicated that the United States believes Iraq has the right to do what it deems necessary, be it the overthrow of the leadershp, its natural replacement, or anything else. In the same manner, the White House has hinted that its plans do not include the immediate removal of Saddam Husayn from power. It seems, however, that sufficiently strong political, economic, and diplomatic factors will help those forces that will try to get rid of the current President, be they inside Iraq or outside.

Indeed, the war has ended in the Arabian Gulf and lessons must be learned from every experience, including the bitter experiences. We sincerely wish that we will not have to learn such lessons all the time.

Time for 'Political Means'

LD0203063991 Moscow World Service in English 2300 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Vladislav Kozyakov commentary]

[Text] The most urgent problem is to set up a security system that would rule out war in the region. The Soviet foreign minister, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, called attention to this when he told a news conference in Moscow on Thursday, quote, we must rule out completely any resumption of military activities in the Persian Gulf region, unquote. Of course, this is the (?work) primarily of the countries in the region.

There must also be further moves by the UN Security Council. In fact, it has already gotten down to work. But contacts between Moscow and Washington must also play no small role in hammering out a security system for the Gulf and the Middle East as a whole. Secretary of State Baker is expected to visit the Soviet Union shortly. Some members of Congress and news analysts have expressed the view that the United States should not collaborate with the Soviet Union on the matter of a peace settlement. In the opinion of Senator Dole, Moscow must be given to understand that it should not interfere. Now talk of this kind hardly shows any vision or realism.

It is not difficult to imagine what the consequences of the Iraqi agression against Kuwait would have been if the Soviet Union and United States had not acted together at the very outset to stop it. Remember the U.S.-Soviet summit in Helsinki, called by President Bush, and the 12 resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, drafted and adopted with the cooperation of the Soviet Union and United States. And now consider the problems that need to be resolved if new conflicts in the Middle East are to be prevented. One is the establishment of guarantees that excessive stockpiles of weapons will not appear in the region. Can the United States or any other country resolve this problem singlehanded? Another problem is the peaceful adjustment of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Can this be resolved without the concerted efforts of all the countries involved, including the Soviet Union? And these are but two examples.

Now that hostilities have ended, problems have come to the fore that cannot be resolved even by a U.S. Army half a million strong; the more so since these troops, according to Defense Secretary Cheney, will soon have to be returned home. With the war over, it is time to use political means, that is, diplomacy, negotiations. In this area, Soviet-American cooperation will unquestionably be important, even irreplaceable. And it appears that the White House is aware of this. The President's press secretary, Marlin Fitzwater, said on Wednesday the United States was grateful to the Soviet Union of supporting the Security Council resolutions and would continue working with the Soviet Union in the United Nations and at other forums in trying to resolve postwar problems. Such an approach will meet with understanding in Moscow.

Situation Requires 'Patience'

LD0103210291 Moscow International Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Aleksey Zlatorunskiy commentary]

[Excerpts] News of the end of military operations in the Gulf region attracted everyone's attention. In the Soviet Union it was considered the fruit of collective efforts, both political and military. [passage omitted]

Ideas of comprehensive peace in the Middle East are attractive to all; however, this peace and its structure are not understood by all in the same way. Some Arab countries, for example, express apprehension that the defeat of Iraq could lead to a change in the balance of power in the Middle East, which is already fragile. Will it not be used to increase the influence of the United States, and consequently Israel?

This apprehension has it own (?justifications). First, historical examples abound on this in the Middle East itself. Second, the U.S. press published frank predications relating to the aims of the United States in the Gulf region. Equally inviting caution is news that appeared in the press to the effect that an agreement had been reached, before the end of the military operations, to sell weapons for over $30 billion to Turkey and a number of Arab countries.

Perhaps the Middle East will soon once again become the largest market for the sale of arms, and a field for a new round of the arms race. Regarding the Arab world, it is not easy to overcome the feelings of spite and doubt which emerged in some Arab countries for other Arab countries during the war in the Gulf. It is not at all easy to restore sympathy for the Palestinians, a number of whose leaders supported Iraq in this war, and lost the backing of the Gulf states.

In short, the problems are abundant, and it is required that the best way should be found to solve them immediately. It is evident that this aim also requires patience and the abstaining from hasty decisions. That is exactly what the Soviet Union is calling for.

Iraq, Saddam's Fate Examined

LD0203160191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1430 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Studio interview with All-Union Radio commentator Igor Surguchev by announcer—live]

[Text] [Announcer] Stubborn rumors about Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's intention to give up power and leave the country have been circulating in recent days. These rumors, which are already taking the form of reports citing informed sources, have appeared in the pages of several foreign publications, and although they have been refuted by some people, they evidently should not be considered any empty fantasy. For example. AGENCE-FRANCE PRESS today quotes the following

remark by King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, who is known for his cautious, well-considered judgements: I am convinced, the king said, that a new regime will come to power in Iraq after the end of the war. I believe, Fahd noted, that new figures of a national and Islamic dimension will soon appear in Iraq.

In other words, we are dealing with a possible change of power in postwar Iraq. I have invited our commentator, Igor Surguchev, to have a chat about this. Go ahead.

[Surguchev] I believe that this subject is very topical, and it is not so much a matter of the fate of Saddam Husayn himself—although I think he ought to be tried as an international criminal. This issue is much wider and more serious, because it concerns the future of Iraq and the whole Near and Middle Eastern region. I feel that the postwar peace structure in this reigon, if we want it to be just and stable, is scarcely probable if the current regime in Baghdad remains. Its replacement is a completely necessary prerequisite for the establishmnent of the effective of the effective system of collective security in the Near East of which USSR Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh spoke a few days ago, and the idea of which is now being examined in international political circles.

[Announcer] Why do you think that Saddam Husayn's regime cannot play a due part in the postwar peace structure? He has suffered a major defeat, both militarily and politically, and he will evidently draw appropriate conclusions from this, if he has not done so already.

[Surguchev] The point is that he has not drawn sensible, realistic conclusions from what has happened, and it does not look as though he is in a position to draw them. If the Iraqi ruler had sincerely repented of his crimes and fundamentally reviewed his policy, my point of view might be different. Nonetheless, it is hard to require his neighbor, Iran, to trust Saddam Husayn, even if he were to say that he had given up his previous goals and aims, because he cannot be trusted, and he still maintains a significant military potential. The main thing, however, is that no reevaluation of values has occurred in Baghdad. Even after the crushing defeat, Iraqi propaganda is continuing to play the same tune; therefore, I think that only a change of power in Baghdad can alter the situation and return that country to the road of good-neighborliness and cooperation, both with the countries of the regime and with the world community as a whole.

[Announcer] It is impermissible, however, to seek such a change of power by interference from outside.

[Surguchev] I agree with you completely. I am not talking about outside interference. The question of power in the country must, of course. be decided by the people of Iraq themselves. They must make the correct choice that corresponds to their national interests and the interests of peace and stability in the region. In this connection, I should like to hope that the Saudi king's prediction will come true.

[Announcer] How do you assess our Soviet approach to the postwar development of the situation in the Near and Middle East?

[Surguchev] In the general form, as set out by Comrade Bessmertnykh and his deputy, Belonogov, our country's position fits in completely with the ideas being expressed on this matter in Western European countries, in particular. Undoubtedly, there has to be a coordinated approach to tackling the complex issues of the maintenance of both political and military stability in that region, limiting arms suplies to that area, and arranging a system of collective security. Of course, all this presupposed a just settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestinian problem. What is more, it must be based on the relevant UN resolutions.

I believe it will be extremely difficult, however—maybe impossible—to even approach a solution to all these tasks if Saddam Husayn's dictatorship remains in Iraq or one similar to it comes to power. Furthermore, I feel that on this point our position is insufficiently precise. I think we must state clearly that the USSR does not intend to support such an authority in Baghdad or to cooperate with it as before, for we too have to learn lessons from the crisis in the Persian Gulf zone. Morality has to be present in our policy in that region as well. It is time to learn to choose our friends and, in general, to seek to maintain friendly relations with a wide range of states, without dividing them, as we have been accustomed to doing, into progressive and reactionary, revolutionary and conservative. We have realized, from the example of Iraq, what such a division costs. A new approach is especially necessary if we really want to encourage the establishment of peace, stablity and good-neighborliness in the Near and Middle East. I also think that it is time to work with the United States, on the basis of common principles, toward an end to Soviet-U.S. military-political rivalry in that part of the world and, incidentally, in others too.

[Announcer] The U.S.itself will have to be prepared for that too.

[Surguchev] Of course. it has to be mutual.

[Announcer] Thank you. That was a conversation with Igor Surguchev, an All-Union Radio commentator.

Baghdad Difficulties Reported

PM0403121891 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 4 Mar 91 Second Edition p 1

[Report by Andrey Stepanov from Baghdad: "Baghdad Days"]

[Text] In the last few evenings the sky above Baghdad, Ramadi, and other Iraqi cities through which I have passed has been lit by a fireworks display of tracer bullets and signal rockets. It looked as if the people firing them were aiming at an American stationary satellite that hangs like a bright star over southern Iraq and Kuwait.

It was, however, the Iraqi people's army—to which a significant proportion of the country's male population belongs—with their firearms, firing into the air to express its joy over the cessation of offensive operations by the allied troops and the Iraqi leadership's agreement to fulfill all UN Security Council resolutions. For them, this meant withdrawal from Kuwait and the end of a war that has truly worn out the population.

Baghdad today reminds me of Beirut—there, like here, there is no electricity, water supplies are not good, and terrible gaping wounds mark many military and civilian buildings. Whereas the enterprising people of Beirut contrive somehow to shake off the difficulties and are helped by duty-free trade, things are difficult for the people of Baghdad, under the conditions of a strict economic blockade. There is no gasoline, so there is very little traffic in the streets, and there is no bottled gas, because the plants and depots have been destroyed. They are taking water straight from the Tigris. Outbreaks of acute intestinal diseases have been noted, particularly among children. A threat of epidemics has arisen. In some places the population is felling the cherished trees to make fires to prepare food and warm themselves on the chilly nights. Everything suggests that this huge city, whose main arteries have been severed and whose nerve centers have been hit, should suffer its final agony and die. Paradoxically, however, this has not happened.

Trade centers and bazaars are coming to life; the prices of fruit and vegetables may have multiplied, but it must be admitted that they remain within reach. The schools are soon to open their doors, and local television has gone on the air with a half-hour broadcast, for the first time after a long break. A particularly grave situation has arisen with bread supplies; however, there is no sign of panic or desperation. True, a general sorrow and aloof determination can be sensed. Because of the lack of telephone communications with other parts of the country, because the system was completely put out of action by the bombings, there is no clear picture of what is happening.

We drove around a number of ruined sites in a car brought in from Beirut and filled with Jordanian gas.

Pictures of a bombed children's food plant are glimpsed, as if in a terrible kaleidoscope. No, it was not producing chemical weapons, it was providing 10-15 tonnes of powdered milk a day. Operating engineer Husayn Nima says: "We paid $16 million to buy and install equipment from the well-known French firm SADATEK with the help of West German and Swiss companies."

The people of Baghdad are getting their breath back, the raids have stopped, and returning troops are beginning to arrive from the south. Iraqi officials, Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz in particular, claim that U.S. forward units, having cut off the Baghdad-Basra highway, are preventing the troops from withdrawing in an organized manner, and this could disrupt the still fragile cease-fire. It is proposed to begin talks between the two sides' military representatives today. Hopes are rising that the bloodshed has ended, and the time is approaching not so much for the settling of scores and the search for culprits, as for the alleviation of the terrible situation in which both the Iraqi and the Kuwaiti people find themselves, and for concrete steps along the path of a political settlement of this and other regional problems.

East Europe

Envoy to Albania Meets Albanian Official

LD0203130191 Moscow TASS in English 1155 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] Belgrade March 2 TASS—Albanian [Deputy] Foreign Minster Muhamet Kapllani on Friday received Vyacheslav P. Durnev, charge d'affaires ad interim of the USSR, on the occasion of the opening of a Soviet Embassy in Tirana.

Possibilities for the development of contacts between the two countries in fields that are of mutual interest were discussed, the ATA news agency reported.

General on Troop Withdrawal From East Europe

LD0103111691 Moscow TASS in English 1101 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Oleg Moskovskiy]

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—"The withdrawal of the central (Czechoslovakia) and southern (Hungary) groups of troops will be completed by June 30, 1991," Colonel-General Gherman Burutin, first deputy head of a main department of the Soviet Armed Forces' general staff, told TASS today in view of the completion of a regular" phase of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from East European countries and Mongolia.

Soviet troops are being withdrawn from the region "strictly in accordance with the Soviet Union's unilateral initiative, intergovernmental agreements and plans," Burutin said.

In all, more than 223,000 servicemen, over 8,000 tanks, about 4,000 artillery systems, and more than 760 aircraft have been withdrawn from Eastern Europe and Mongolia in 1987-1991, the general said.

Yet to be withdrawn are as follows: 15 percent of the personnel and up to 10 percent of hardware from the central group of troops, 20 percent of the personnel and up to 15 percent of hardware from the southern group of troops." the small contingent of troops remaining in Mongolia will be finally withdrawn in 1992, Burutin said.

In accordance with the earlier concluded agreements between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany, a withdrawal of the western group of troops from the territory of Germany has been started, he pointed out.

The withdrawal plan for the first two months of this year has been implemented in the whole. More than 16,000 servicemen, about 500 tanks and over 230 artillery systems have been withdrawn. At the same time, the general believes, the systematic character of the withdrawal of Soviet troops is being substantially influenced by the attitude of the leadership of a number of East European countries that raised transportation fare.

"The non-constructive stand, taken by "the Polish Government that hampers the transit of troop trains and motor convoys of the western group of troops across Polish territory, required the introduction of substantial changes to the transportation plans," General Burutin emphasised.

Poland's Skubiszewski Calls For New Treaty

PM0403094591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 1 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[Report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, POSTFACTUM, INTERFAX, REUTER, and UPI column: "Skubiszewski on Relations With USSR"]

[Text] Polish Foreign Minister Skubiszewski, addressing a session of a Sejm commission, has talked about the need to restructure relations between the USSR and Poland on a basis of good-neighborliness, partnership, and mutual advantage. He noted the importance of signing a new treaty with the USSR to replace the existing alliance commitment.

Consulates Opened in Romania, Kishinev

LD0103220891 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1300 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] In Bucharest an exchange of notes between representatives of the USSR Embassy and Romania and the Ministries of foreign affairs of this country [as heard] took place in connection with the establishment of a Consulate General of the Soviet Union in Iasi and the Consulate General of Romania in Kishinev. This agreement was reached during a visit by the USSR foreign minister to Romania in January this year and it comes into force as of today.

West Europe

Scandinavian Leaders Cited on Baltic Issue

PM2802160591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Union Edition p 1

[Report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, POSTFACTUM, SIBINFORM, REUTER roundup under the general heading "Position on the Baltic": "Nordic Council"]

[Text] The Copenhagen session of the Nordic Council is continuing to discuss the Baltic problem. Former Danish Prime Minister Jorgensen, the elected chairman of the council presidium, said: "It should be quite obvious that we are offering political support to parliamentarism and democracy in the Baltics. We support talks on independence and cannot agree with terror or the threat of terror."

Icelandic Prime Minister Hermansson voiced Reykjavik's readiness to act as intermediary in talks between the Soviet Government and the Baltic republics and asked the council members to support this initiative. Finnish head of government Holkeri, however, voiced the opinion that the CSCE is the most suitable forum for talks on settling the Baltic crisis.,

Danish Foreign Minister Ellemann-Jensen said that the country's political leadership had held talks 25 February with representatives of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. At the close of these talks it is planned to sign working protocols which will, according to the minister, reflect Denmark's recognition of the Baltic republics since 1921 and outline future cooperation and the possibilities for establishing diplomatic relations with the republics as soon as this is practically possible.

Nordic Council Stand Criticized

PM2802222591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 1 Mar 91 Second Edition p 4

["Editorial commentary": "Who Needs a Storm in the Baltic"]

[Text] Nordic Council sittings usually go virtually unnoticed. Traditionally the questions discussed there concern cooperation between the five countries of northern Europe: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland. But the present, 39th, session of this consultative organization has not attracted the attention of Scandinavia's inhabitants alone.

This is the first time that foreign policy questions have been the subject of debate. In 1955, when Finland joined the Nordic Council, which had been set up three years before, the sides agreed not to tackle problems of formulating joint positions in the foreign policy sphere. But now representatives of the north European countries are discussing questions of cooperating with the Baltic republics. Although it is a question of problems of education, ecology, and cultural exchanges, this event clearly goes beyond the framework of the usual consultations.

Many people saw the inclusion of the "Baltic" subject on the agenda as a change in the Scandinavian countries' traditionally restrained foreign policy course and deemed this interference in USSR internal affairs. On the other hand, some people regard the involvement—albeit as "guests"—of representatives of the Soviet Baltic republics in the regional council's work as all but a step toward establishing official ties. Or another step—after the Icelandic Althing (parliament) recently decided to establish diplomatic relations with Lithuania. Although most North European politicians consider it premature to discuss the question of official ties and

cooperation with the Baltic, as we can see this discussion did take place and aroused considerable emotion.

It is understandable that the crux of the matter is by no means the display of feelings of solidarity with peoples on the other side of the Baltic. No one would deny that the participants in the Paris meeting last fall of leaders of countries involved in the Helsinki process felt this solidarity. They nonetheless refused to give the Baltic republics observer status, reluctant—as they pointed out at the time—to create precedents and complicate the situation for Moscow. There were also "domestic" reasons for this: Recognition of the Baltic republics might encourage separatist sentiments in Europe itself, and there are enough of those already.

People in the north European countries cannot help but see that the path of confrontation between the Baltic trio and Moscow is hopeless. H. Holkeri, head of the Finnish Government, and Swedish Foreign Minister S. Andersson—according to whom, "Stockholm advocates serious talks between the USSR central authorities and the Baltic republics"—also recognize this. Danish representatives, however, with the backing of the Norwegian Parliament, strove to secure observer status for Baltic representatives in the Nordic Council. As is well known, the proposal did not get through; however, by the very fact of their unprecedented discussion of Baltic problems in the Nordic Council, Scandinavian countries generated certain hopes among the leadership of the three republics. In particular, Latvian and Estonian Presidents A. Gorbunovs and A. Ruutel and Lithuanian Vice President B. Kuzmickas used their presence at the council to call for the convocation of an international conference in support of the movement to restore independence. Thus, another step has been taken to internationalize a conflict that, notwithstanding, is a domestic matter.

What can be said about this?

Current relations between the center and the republics in the Soviet Union are so complex that any interference can only complicate the quest for a mutually acceptable solution.

It is at the least foolish to pretend that nothing now links Vilnius, Riga, and Tallinn with Moscow. Matters can only be helped by considering all the realities and all the nuances of the current situation. Finding a quick compromise and reaching agreement would benefit both the Baltic republics and the north European countries, with whom we have developed firm, good-neighborly ties.

Nordic Council Decisions Viewed

LD0103212791 Moscow TASS in English 2054 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Sidorov]

[Text] Copenhagen March 1 TASS—The 39th session of the Nordic Council, an international consultative organisation, ended its work here today. The Nordic Council's chief concern is promoting cooperation between North European states—Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Iceland.

The five-day session agenda covered an extensive range of problems relating to cooperation between Nordic countries and East European countries and the Soviet Union in the economic, cultural and ecological fields.

Many discussions focused on cooperation between Nordic countries and the Soviet Baltic republics. The problem became particularly acute after Iceland's Althing (parliament) decided to establish diplomatic relations with Lithuania.

However, despite the desire of North European countries to help Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in becoming independent, most Scandinavian politicians pointed out that the establishment of official relations with the Baltic republics would be premature at this time.

The session decided to assist the Baltic republics in their striving for independence by expanding economic and cultural ties and cooperation in the field of environmental protection.

The justice ministries of the five countries reached an agreement to coordinate actions by the Nordic Council member countries if an absolute emergency arises in the Baltic republics entailing an exodus. At this time, however, the ministers noted, the situation in the Baltics does not require changes in legislation on refugees in the Nordic countries.

Within the framework of the session, the Danish leaders met representatives of the Baltic republics and decided to sign working protocols with Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Estonian President Arnold Ruutel, Latvian President Anatolijs Gorbunovs and Lithuanian Vice-President Bronislavas Kuzmickas attended the session as guests.

Nordic Council Procedures Detailed

PM0103154191 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 1 Mar 91 p 3

[A. Baranov report: "Given the Floor During Recess"]

[Text] Copenhagen—A procedural ruse had to be used so Baltic representatives could address the Nordic Council. As we have reported, the 39th Nordic Council Session is under way in Copenhagen. For the first time in this organization's history the leaders of the USSR's Baltic republics were invited to the forum as guests.

Denmark, which holds first place for encouraging the Baltic's fight for freedom, and Iceland, backing the Danes, pressed for the Baltic guests to be accorded observer status at the session with the right to take part in debates—which does, incidentally, contravene the Nordic Council Charter. The proposal did not succeed, however, because it met with objections from Finland

and Norway. Swedish Prime Minister I. Carlsson also held a fairly well-considered position contrary to Copenhagen's hopes, advocating that "conditions be created for the Baltic republics to acquire their independence peacefully."

To avoid putting the guests in a totally awkward position, the Nordic Council leadership decided to agree to an unprecedented procedural ruse and give the Baltic representatives an opportunity to deliver prepared speeches. The "special measure"—as it was described by Nordic Council Presidium Chairman A. Jorgensen—consisted in the session's specially suspending its work for a while and, during this official "recess," the guests from Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were given the floor.

"You must realize that not all Northern European countries can force their policy as fast as we would like," Danish Foreign Minister U. Ellemann-Jensen explained to the Baltic representatives with a hint of apology for the need for the phony decision. The minister's tone, however, was more stern when criticizing the statement from the Soviet Foreign Ministry representative, who regarded the attempts by a number of politicians to use the Nordic Council to play the Baltic card as interference in the USSR's domestic affairs. The minister warned of the "inadmissibility of submitting to Soviet threats and relaxing attention to the fate of the Baltic states." Denmark's prime minister, P. Schluter, also backed his minister.

Well, the Danish leadership seems to be deliberately seeking to enter into open confrontation with the USSR. It is obvious, however, that the Danish position is based not on a noble desire to help the Baltic republics acquire independence as such but on cold calculation aimed at exploiting our country's current difficulties to safeguard their economic interests and political influence in the Baltic.

I know that people in Copenhagen are keeping a watchful eye on everything that Soviet newspapers are writing about Denmark and sometimes take umbrage at their "bias" and "menacing tone," regarding this as throwbacks to "conservative thinking." Nonetheless, I will venture to say that it is the people currently at the political helm in Denmark who are unprepared to think in the new way and rid themselves of the ideological dogmas of the "cold war."

Supreme Soviet

28 February Session Proceedings Detailed

LD2802220191

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian at 1857 GMT on 28 February broadcasts a 58-minute "At the USSR Supreme Soviet" program, featuring recorded highlights of the 28 February USSR Supreme Soviet session in the Kremlin.

The announcer opens the program: "At today's joint session, deputies continued the debate on the first reading of the draft law on the Cabinet of Ministers. However, they only got around to this after some quite heated discussions. Many deputies were unsure as to what should be examined first—the draft law on the Cabinet or its membership i.e. the deputy premiers, the ministers, and chairmen of committees. The deputies spent almost an hour discussing this question. Two mutually exclusive proposals were put forward. Then a third one, designed to reconcile the previous two, emerged. Even Prime Minister Pavlov spoke on this:"

Pavlov then speaks: "Esteemed comrades!

"I would like to draw your attention to one circumstance which I have not heard anything about for some reason. You—I hope you will not take offense—are confirming neither ministers nor deputy chairmen. Candidatures submitted to you are candidatures nominated by the president in order to appoint specific people to this or that post after receiving your consent. If, for some reason, you do not agree with these candidates, be so kind as to express your opinions. The way this question is raised here today shows that, basically, you want to start discussing the president's program and his actions anew. I think that this is procedurally incorrect. Another point I wish to draw your attention to is a purely human one. People who have been in suspense for such a long time cannot be held responsible for their work—cannot be. They are working, quite simply, honestly. They are coming to work every day, not knowing in what capacity they are doing their job. You yourselves will understand that given our difficult work, the Cabinet cannot be held responsible for tackling cardinal and fundamental decisions, which are sometimes extremely acute and important, when it does not know whether it will still be in place tomorrow. That is one point.

"Second, the people that the Cabinet expects to carry out its decisions—whom it sometimes orders to carry out actions which are sometimes, i would say, very unpleasant—those people also do not know in their hearts where they stand. He is ordering me to do this, but somebody else will come along tomorrow and accuse me of messing things up. That is what goes through these people's minds. The Cabinet cannot operate in these conditions. That is why, taking account of the acute present situation in the national economy, I would ask you to examine this issue as soon as possible. I am not against you examining this question and settling it with a law on the Cabinet. There is, of course, no doubt that this law is needed, but people also have to get their jobs done. Look at it this way. No matter who the premier is, no matter who—he has two first deputies and another four deputy premiers appointed to help him. But we cannot take the place of the Cabinet. We simply cannot. That is physically impossible.

"Therefore, I would ask you not to deviate from the main task. Please do not forget that you have endorsed the program. You have endorsed the president. Therefore, do at least endorse those people whom the president trusts."

Deputies Chabanov and Yaroleyev are then shown debating the cabinet of ministers issue, with Yaroleyev stressing that the Supreme Soviet must not become a government hostage.

The announcer reports that 24 deputies spoke on the issue, dominating the morning session. He adds that the draft law was adopted in the first reading and that one week was allotted for finalization. The program then switches to coverage of the evening session of the Supreme Soviet, showing Lukyanov on the stand introducing the debate on the appointment of deputy prime ministers, ministers, and chairmen of state committees and commissions.

Lukyanov announces Lev Ryabev's nomination as deputy prime minister; Ryabev appears briefly on the stand; Lukyanov proposes a vote on Ryabev's appointment; a vote is taken, with 326 for and 19 against.

Lukyanov announces Fedor Senko's nomination as deputy prime minister; Senko appears briefly on the stand; Lukyanov proposes a vote on Senko's appointment; a vote is taken, with 332 for and 11 against.

Lukyanov announces Shcherbakov's nomination as deputy prime minister in charge of economic questions. Shcherbakov appears on the stand and answers questions on Moscow City's pricing policy, the pensions law, and vodka production. On Moscow City's pricing policy, Shcherbakov agrees that prices have risen sharply inside and outside Moscow but not because of government decisions, since the government has not made such decisions. Shcherbakov criticizes the fact that laws passed by the Supreme Soviet are not being implemented and accuses local authorities of taking their own legislative initiative, particularly in Russia. Lukyanov interjects, suggesting criminal action be taken against those failing to implement union laws. On the pensions law, Shcherbakov says that he met Ippolinskiy and Voronin on pensions, confirms that new pension arrangements will go into effect in 1992, and describes provisions of the new pensions law which will be presented soon. Shcherbakov then praises Gritsenko's commission on social questions for its work on the pensions question. On vodka production, Shcherbakov recognizes that vodka has always been considered an excise good that contributes to the treasury but admits that he does not

have complete information on all economic questions, including the question of the future of vodka factories. He concludes by offering to investigate the matter.

Gritsenko begins discussing the work of his commission and gives Shcherbakov his full backing.

A vote is then taken on Shcherbakov's appointment, with 326 votes for and 30 against.

Lukyanov, who is chairing the session, then says: "Comrades, moving swiftly on, I just want to read out the following letter, which it is requested to proclaim here at the session. This is, as it happens, a recommendation both to the Cabinet of Ministers and to Comrade Shcherbakov. Deputy Khalilov writes: Many deputies think implementation of measures planned by the Cabinet of Ministers to stabilize the consumer market and to carry out pricing policy are being drawn out to an unjustified degree. We have touched a most sensitive spot, having aroused people, and are keeping them in an uncertain state. We are again being convinced of this at the meetings of Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev in Belorussia. Delay in this matter is playing into the hands of swindlers, speculators, and dishonest people. Foodstuffs and goods are building up at bases, depots, and in the private sector waiting for an increase in prices. All of this assists the further flourishing of the shadow economy. Every day of delay facilitates the further destabilization of the consumer market and has a negative effect on peoples' mood. Those forces for whom the further worsening of the sociopolitical situation in the country, especially on the eve of the referendum, is beneficial, cannot fail to make use of this. I consider it necessary to ask the president and the Cabinet of Ministers to reach agreement and implement in the next few days, before our departures to our constituencies, the measures planned to stabilize the consumer market, to fix prices, and compensation by his decree and decisions by the Council of Ministers."

Lukyanov then turns to a statement from Deputy Tsybukh on adopting a decision on enforcing Union laws. The statement says a week should be allowed to draft such a decision. A vote is taken on the statement, with 322 for and 11 against.

At 1922 GMT Prime Minister Pavlov again takes the floor:

"I would like to give information to deputies a propos the letter which has been read out. The thing is, up to today we are delaying the situation with regard to prices and social protection not because the Cabinet is not ready or the president is not ready. The point is that the Council of the Federation is not ready.

"Today, we do not have confirmation from half the republics. I must say that we have a working agreement, but how can we carry out such an important measure if—lets say—we have the signature from Kazakhstan of only the chairman of the price committee? He is not the leader of the republic. Therefore, there isn't confirmation of the carrying out of these measures. And, as you realize, they can only be carried out by everyone together. Here, there cannot be...[changes thought] we have already seen not that long ago how the Russian Federation introduced procurement prices on meat and the Ukraine did not. What happened there? So, it was immediately necessary to put up, as it were, cordons sanitaires.

"But today, we do not have the confirmation, you see, of such republics as the Russian Federation and Belorussia. We have confirmations with observations from several other republics. We do not have confirmation from a whole number of republics. That is, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Moldova. Well, such major republics as Russia and Belorussia are not confirming today.

"We are particularly put on our guard by the Russian Federation. I have to be totally frank here. After all, you know that when we conducted this study—and I recounted this frankly, everywhere—we had dealings with the Supreme Soviet Presidium of the Russian Federation. It came up with an affirmative decision. After the Russian Federation's decision, we, as it were, settled everything, and I received an answer from Comrade Yeltsin in three lines to my official inquiry to the effect that he categorically disagrees and thinks this should not be done at all and that they will not.

"After this, the situation arose in which the Supreme Soviet had already voted, but not the Presidium. But all the same, to this day we do not have an answer from the Russian Federation, and from Comrade Yeltsin in particular. Will the Russian Federation carry this out or not? We do not know."

Vitaliy Fedorovich Konovalov, who is nominated for minister of atomic power and industry, then takes the stand to answer questions.

An unidentified deputy begins: "I have the following question for you. I have had occasion to tour nuclear power stations. A number of reactors are now ready for start-up. What is your opinion, coming as they say to the post of minister, of what needs to be done to get this matter going? What compensation is to be received by the regions on whose territory these nuclear power stations and additional reactors are situated? I would like you to answer that."

Konovalov responds: "Well, I understand perfectly well that after Chernobyl it is of course necessary, first and foremost, to take account of the people of the region where the nuclear power station is situated. That is why this is the basis of our ministry's policy. That is why, without the region's agreement, there can of course be no question at all of starting up this station. That is why it is necesasry to explain to people that it is safe. Two questions exist: its safety and the fact that the waste that is formed (?and that which can be reused) must be reliably reprocessed. For this work the appropriate programs, large-scale programs exist. But all the latest sets

that are now being built and are to be restarted again, from the practical view of safety, meet all international criteria. In this respect we are working with all regions concerned. And I believe that the great wave of public distrust, through explanations and tours at the station itself—all work carried out directly, locally, and at the station—it...[changes thought] We are meeting with understanding among the public. Two documents are being prepared now, or more correctly, three documents. One has already been brought out: for those compensations, and even not compensations, but in the event of the region giving its agreement. [sentence as heard]

"There are a nunmber of regions in which, practically, from the point of view of electric power, they perhaps do not need the construction of the next set—and they are giving away power through overcurrent—so that the region is interested in building up capacities where this does not interfere either with ecology or anything else and there is a need to enlarge this station. That is why such a document has come out and this, it must be said, has played a positive role, because today we have, at least I have, proposals from a number, from many oblasts, in particular from East Kazakhstan for Ust- Kamenogorsk, from Semipalatinsk, from Chimkent, about the need for building nuclear power stations. Moreover, lately the Voronezh Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies decided to build another stage. There is Kola and a number of other oblasts. We are working directly with deputies, with the deputies' corps of these oblasts."

Comrade (?Yablokov) then asks a question: "Esteemed Vitaliy Fedorovich. When replying to Deputy Pinyagin's question, the prime minister said that he is unable to reply to the question as to whether the issue of the burial of nuclear waste is to be included in the Council of Ministers' functions. Well, according to the law on the Council, er, Cabinet of Ministers. I will read it out—it is written here: The Cabinet of Ministers organizes the safe production, storage, and use of fissionable materials. The question was asked by Comrade Pinyagin that burial should also, without fail, be included in the function of the Cabinet of Ministers. What is your view?"

Konovalov replies: "My view is that this should be done. Why? I will explain. In view of the fact (?that no definition was given) of what waste is, today there is some lack of understanding. Well, because it simply needs to be explained. The fact is that what originates immediately at the station in the form of waste materials: discharges, spills, perhaps waste, etc, all these are waste materials that require processing and burial, both liquid and solid. But there is spent fuel at stations. This spent fuel is not waste but is to be passed on in the technological process. And these fuel elements are to be taken to the appropriate works for reprocessing as there are very many valuable components and many isotopes that are needed by the national economy, and, most important is the fact that we simply need to take less uranium and fissionable materials from the earth to obtain these same kilowatts, that is to say, it's substantially...[changes thought] But I believe that this must be decisively [word indistinct] so that the emphasis is put on the burial and the processing of this fuel."

An unidentified deputy asks: "Esteemed Vitaliy Fedorovich, this is by way of expanding your answer regarding the hot water supply systems. At Chernobyl Nuclear Electric Power Station [AES], say, there are a huge number of them, with enormous capacity, activity. How do you see this? And then, I just have a couple of other brief questions. The first is, what is your attitude to the decision of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet to close Chernobyl AES, and in particular to close the first set as soon as possible?"

"My second question is, how do you feel about—this is the suggestion of our ecological association Green—that an expert international assessment of nuclear electric power stations be carried out in the Ukraine, but without the involvement of the International Atomic Energy Agency, because we consider that that organization is an interested party?"

Konovalov responds: "Well, there are many questions there. The first question, (?as I heard it), was about stopping Chernobyl AES. I consider that there are no technical reasons to stop the sets operating at the Chernobyl station. Of course these are not modern sets; and by today's standards, the first, second, and subsequent generations before this, before the third generation, do of course have certain deviations. And throughout the world licenses are issued to stations for the whole term of their existence. The next generation of stations is being built in our country and we are raising the question of bringing the previous generation up to the same safety standards. That work is in hand. But not everything can be brought fully into accord. Because these are naturally different generations. But safety is being ensured in this case.

"As for Chernobyl, [words indistinct] the first measure on the physics of the reactor. So there are no technical reasons to stop it, and we don't see any. The more so as you have also got to take into account the fact that—if you're worried about safety and so on—after all, you, I was at the session, after all, and spoke, and as you know very well, and this was mentioned, you can't cover trouble with more trouble. We want to stop three sets at the Chernobyl station—of the first and second generation—but we are bringing misfortune on the people. There are thousands of people. A new town has been built, there are skilled power workers, a very good collective has been built up, the whole infrastructure has been created there for the operation of that station. And, still more important, the whole 30-kilometer zone there is empty: something we are always afraid of. So from my point of view there is no reason. And I signed such a document on your behalf, on behalf of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine and the Council of Ministers. You have that document, and it is up to you to decide. And it is necessary at the same time to decide—if you decide to close them—what is to become of the people, what is to become of the town? Because to decide today that while

some build it and do it, someone else decides differently, well, what do we do then? The Ukraine must say what we're to do now with the people, in that situation?"

"The day before yesterday I was at the ecology committee. And there was a very interesting and complex discussion; but all the same I consider that for me it was very useful from the safety viewpoint and so on. The comrades were asking whether we need an international expert assessment at all. Let's dispense with it, because (?we have our own) point of view on this. I feel we must approach each specific case in a specific way. I can give you a simple example. And you, too, when you spoke, talked about—declared it to be a disaster, and so on. So we have ceased to trust the professionals, unfortunately. That is altogether ruinous for the country. We had a decision from the most, the biggest expert assessment [words indistinct] USSR Ministry of Health. It checked everything and said that practically, after the time that has passed, there is absolutely no danger. The people— I have been there, and addressed meetings and so on—the people don't believe it. So the president, we consulted with the president of Kazakhstan, Comrade Nazarbayev, and he said: well then, let us get an international expert opinion. Though no one, until then, [words indistinct] on production where there's been an accident—just as the Americans, also, keep them off such production."

A vote on Konovalov's appointment is taken, with 325 for and 9 against.

Yuriy Volmer is then nominated as merchant marine minister; deputies vote on Volmer's appointment without debate, with 305 for and 9 against.

Gabrielyants is nominated as geology minister; Gabrielyants takes the stand briefly, where he is congratulated on his birthday; deputies vote on Gabrielyants's appointment, with 329 for and 12 against.

At 1936 GMT, Dmitriy Timofeyevich Yazov, who is nominated as defense minister to the Cabinet of Ministers, takes the stand to answer questions.

An unidentified deputy begins: "Esteemed Dmitriy Timofeyevich, I would like to hear from you, as minister of defense, about when we are going to stop using the Army in interethnic conflicts without the permission of the Supreme Soviet.

"[Yazov] But what evidence do you have that I used the army without the permission of the Supreme Soviet?

"[Deputy] First, in the Baltic region, and, second, in Baku. These matters were not put to the Supreme Soviet!

"[Yazov] The Supreme Soviet did consider the Baltic question, and everyone could see for themselves that the minister of defense did not give permission for the army to be used. There was a decision on Baku by the...

"[Nishanov, interrupting] Supreme Soviet.

"[Yazov] ...Supreme Soviet...

"[Nishanov, interrupting] Supreme Soviet Presidium.

"[Yazov] At any rate, the Supreme Soviet Presidium. So I do not see what complaints you still have."

The deputy responds: "What complaints I have? You say you did not give permission; but you are in charge of the Army, so is the Army getting out of your control?"

Nishanov, who is chairing the session, interrupts: "You asked your question and got your reply, I think."

Another unidentified deputy then asks: "Esteemed Dmitriy Timofeyevich, can one conclude from the way the hostilities in the Persian Gulf have gone that priority must now be given to the air defense troops. If yes, is this conclusion in line with the realities in our country as far as this matter is concerned?"

Yazov responds: "As far as the events in the Persian Gulf region are concerned, we are naturally analyzing the use by the United States and other states of their armed forces, and we are preparing to hold a military-scientific conference. We shall naturally be drawing certain conclusions from this. But we knew beforehand that the United States would always initially carry out an offensive air operation using a large quantity of aircraft of different types and missiles launched from aircraft and from aircraft carriers as well as other types of weapons. Naturally, what happened in Kuwait and Iraq requires a review of attitude to both tactical air defense and the country's air defense network.

"I think we have weak points in our air defense. They need to be examined. But there is another question here as well. Did the air defense system in Iraq work? It failed to work in the majority of cases. Why didn't it work? I would like to say right away that it was not the equipment itself that was to blame. You will know that practically all the MiG-29's and Mirages either ended up on Iranian territory, or they were at airfields located in the southern part of Kuwait and Iraq and came under attack in the first instance. Fighter aircraft took virtually no part or only partially took part in the fighting, and we do not even know of a single case of a fighter shooting down an aircraft of the joint forces. Of the total of 93 aircraft and other airborne craft shot down, the majority were shot down by tactical air defense, mainly the Shilka systems."

A deputy then asks: "Dmitriy Timofeyevich, despite the difficulties over accommodation for soldiers' families, your ministry has, so to speak, the widest network of dacha construction. Do you not think that these dachas should somehow be designated—either they should be handed over to the military, or someone specific should be put in charge of them, because the generals who occupy them live on very free-and-easy terms? My second question is this: Comrade Brezhnev's former dacha has stood empty for 10 years. My question is whether or not you think that it would be better, that it

would not be a bad thing, to put the money spent on the upkeep of this empty dacha into maintaining the families who are...

"[Nishanov, interrupting] Fine, keep it brief.

"[Deputy] ...today (?living in indigence)?"

Yazov answers: "Ministry of Defense dachas have been built for 73 years. All dachas are now rented out. They are rented out to officers and generals. I agree that some dachas can be used to accommodate the officer corps; but, having 100 dachas, can one possibly house a body of nearly 200,000 officers? The main decision, of course, does not concern...

"[Nishanov, interrupting] ...how to carry out the program.

"[Yazov] ...these dachas, and the main task is to carry out the work that the government has set us, connected with setting up a housing pool for the Ministry of Defense."

An unidentified deputy states: "I have already spoken at a meeting of the Interregional Group of Deputies, and I tried to prove that today it is necessary, at all costs, to leave Comrade Yazov as defense minister in view of the situation in which the country now finds itself. If we really care about the Army, the Army needs him. We have a principle: If you disagree, object; if you object, then make a proposal. If someone is submitting a different nomination—go ahead. That is all. All the same, my proposal is that now is the wrong time to start, to continue the questions. It is necessary to vote."

Nishanov agrees, but another deputy wishes to speak. The deputy says: "In our country, and in the Crimea in particular, there are many prohibited areas in which, as it were, army formations are located, and so on and so forth. In the present instance, bearing in mind the fact that we are switching over to the market, they wish to become integrated, that is, merge with local enterprises, and so on and so forth. But, because..."

Nishanov interrupts: "Are you going to ask a question?"

The deputy responds: "Yes. The existence of prohibited areas is an obstacle. Are you thinking of doing anything about it?"

Yazov responds: "In the Soviet Union, prohibited areas account for 6 percent of our territory. In the United States of America, the figure is 23 percent, and no one asks any questions."

Another deputy asks: "Dmitriy Timofeyevich, what do you think of the abolition of pre-conscription military training in schools?"

Yazov answers: "I think it is wrong that the Russian Federation adopted such a decision so that they would not have any such pre-conscription training in schools and would eliminate or put an end to all matters relating to elementary military training and abolish the posts of military instructors. I think it is wrong."

Deputies then vote on Yazov's appointment, with 275 for and 53 against.

Nikolay Vorontsov is nominated as nature and environment minister. Vorontsov answers unidentified deputies' questions on protein production, allergies, and the Baykal pulp and paper combine. At 1955 GMT, while deputies are questioning Vorontsov, the program ends.

1 March Session Proceedings Detailed

LD0103215791

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian at 1930 GMT on 1 March broadcasts a 57-minute "At The USSR Supreme Soviet" program, featuring recorded highlights of the 1 March USSR Supreme Soviet session in the Kremlin.

The program opens with an unidentified announcer noting that the session endorsed six more candidates for ministerial posts. He points out that Terekh was not endorsed.

Lukyanov, chairing the session, says he wishes to finish the debate on ministerial appointments. Vladimir Shimko is proposed as minister of the radio industry. He comes to the rostrum, but does not speak. A vote is taken: 327 in favor, 8 against.

Gennadiy Kudryavtsev is proposed as minister of communications. Kudryavtsev comes to the rostrum, answers a question on spending on communications, and talks about plans to increase charges for telephone calls. They are being increased by 17 percent, he says. He goes on to answer questions about the number of telephones in the country, and about the use of satellite communications in the country, saying that satellite communications are in extensive use.

Deputy (Chibukh) asks about radio telephones, and Kudryatvsev talks about the work being done in Leningrad, Minsk and other cities. He goes on to talk about losses arising from the delivery of newspapers by mail, and contends that extra spending is needed to improve the postal service. After answering more questions about the postal service, a vote is taken on his nomination. Kudryavtsev is approved by 295 votes in favor, with 52 against.

The next candidate to be considered is Chernoivanov, as minister of agriculture.

At 1943 GMT Lukyanov talks briefly about Chernoivanov. Chernoivanov moves to the rostrum. After hearing various questions Chernoivanov says he will do all he can to support poultry farming. He admits there is a difficult situation this year for the spring sowing, the worst in 20 years. All the decrees and decisions are, however, in place to make sure that the spring sowing is carried out properly. The aim is to channel resources and

fuel toward the harvest. Decisions have been made on vegetable farming, and the government is still working on these questions. He goes on to answer questions about the sugar industry, plans to modernize sugar refineries.

A deputy talks about the failure to fulfil plans for the production of crops. Chernoivanov says there is not enough feed at the moment. This year extra funds will be available to purchase the material and technical resources which are required. Referring to mechanization, he agrees that there are difficulties with the harvesting of fodder crops.

Deputy Baykov asks about the development of private farming in the USSR. Chernoivanov says he takes a positive attitude toward private farming. Peasants should be able to dispose of their produce the way they want. We must make use of the equipment, tractors, etc, industry is already manufacturing. Later, special machinery can be developed.

Chernoivanov is approved by 301 votes in favor, 31 against.

Deputy Gukasov raises a point: "The day before yesterday, at a meeting of the agrarian committee which was attended by Comrade Pavlov, we agreed that this Ministry would be called the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. We bore in mind the fact that, during the next few days, it would have to bear a heavy responsibility for the processing industry, for providing it with supplies. Ministries of this kind exist throughout the world. Therefore, we would ask you—we have put forward an official proposal—we ask you to change the name of this ministry.

Lukyanov responds: "All right. Go ahead please, Comrade Pavlov. If you have no objection, Valentin Sergeyevich, we will put forward...

"[Pavlov, interrupting] We support this proposal.

"[Lukyanov] Thus Comrade Chernoivanov is appointed USSR minister of agriculture and food."

Pavlov then says: "Generally speaking, our intention was that attached to the committee—to the Cabinet of Ministers—there should probably be a body, a special committee to handle the processing industry, because we have lost out on this matter and this is one of the central questions in this area."

After agreement on the ministry's name, Lukyanov move on to the next candidacy: "The next proposed candidacy concerns the post of minister of special construction and installation work. As you will understand, this has been a completely centralized ministry up to now. So it is remaining as a ministry. The candidate is Comrade Aleksandr Ivanovich Mikhalchenko. The committee on construction and so on support him wholeheartedly. Nevertheless, take a look at him. In my view, he's a suitable candidate."

Mikhalchenko comments: "I have one request to make. Please keep the original name. The installation workers were waiting for me yesterday evening. They asked me to make it clear that there was no need to insert installation, construction, then installation work. The changes will entail an enormous amount of extra work for the printing presses, and so on. Our outfit is a stable one. It will try to operate in a vigorous way under market conditions." Lukyanov asks: "So, what will the name be?"

Mikhalchenko responds: "Minmontazhspetsstroy. That's what the president called it yesterday, when...

"[Lukyanov, interrupting] Please explain what that means. These abbreviations are not easy for the deputies.

"[Mikhalchenko] The Ministry of Installation and Special Construction Work."

A vote is then taken on Mikhalchenko's candidacy; the result is 318 in favor, 6 against. Mikhalchenko is approved.

Lukyanov then asks Pavlov to comment on the name of the ministry. Pavlov says: "The point is, Anatoliy Ivanovich, that when this question was discussed—this is not a simple question of somebody making a mistake, of somebody not watching what he was doing. We considered that, generally speaking, there was a problem concerning the introduction—let's put it this way, of construction projects that are decisive for the national economy as a whole. You know what the situation is with construction. Therefore, there are projects which, if we are to consider that local bodies in a republic will have to cope with them, we could jeopardize projects that are vitally important for the country. [sentence as heard] Therefore, our Union has several organizations Obviously transportation construction is an example. Installation and special construction work is another obvious example. He, himself, so to speak, is happily doing general construction work. He has no objection to this. So, our intention was that, if need be, we would give him the additional function of general contractor, for certain questions."

Lukyanov adds: "I merely wish to say, comrades, that since the president and the prime minister have submitted this name for the Ministry, and our committee has supported the proposal, there are, I think, no grounds for us to change it."

Questions from the floor are put to proposed minister of shipbuilding, Koksanov. Koksanov appears at the rostrum. He is endorsed by 321 votes in favor, 9 against.

The next candidate is for the Ministry of Trade. Gorbachev's nominee is Terekh. Terekh appears at the rostrum. Following a deputy's questions, Terekh refers first to motor vehicle supplies, pointing out that 50,000 cars which should have come on the market last year did not. Moving on to prices, Terekh insists that the present

system needs to be maintained, and the Ministry of Trade must be kept in existence during this difficult period.

Answering a question on state trade, Terekh talks about the possibility of privatization and denationalization. About half the enterprises in trade are small-scale enterprises, and are ripe for privatization. Many have alrady been transformed into joint-stock companies. Small shops must be privatized.

A deputy complains that the Trade Ministry does not help the consumer, and that nothing has been done during the last 18 months to improve the situation in the shops. Lukyanov puts Terekh's nomination to the vote. Voting is 202 in favor, and 123 against. He is not appointed.

Lushchikov is then endorsed as minister of justice.

At 2018 GMT the program turns to the evening session.

Blokhin, deputy chairman of the Committee on Economic Reform, speaks on currency reform and about a draft law on this subject his committee has been working on. He says the aim is to liberalize the currency system. Blokhin says that the ruble will be the only legal tender on Soviet territory. The importing of Soviet rubles will be illegal, as will be free circulation of foreign currencies. The Foreign Trade Bank is losing its monopoly position. The functions of the republics in currency regulation are being strengthened.

The draft law is approved by 351 votes in favor, with one against.

The announcer says there was heated debate concerning the Aral Sea. A report was delivered by Doguzhiyev and 23 other deputies. It was pointed out that measures that were to be implemented had not been. Deputies advocated drawing up a program to save the Aral Sea region. They called for the prosecution of those to blame for the Aral Sea's plight. Voting on the draft decision was 310 in favor, with two against.

The announcer says the legislature congratulated Gorbachev on his 60th birthday and the program ends.

Adopts Law on Currency Regulation

LD0103134991 Moscow TASS in English 1256 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS legislative correspondent Boris Zverev]

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—The USSR Supreme Soviet today adopted the USSR law on currency regulation, the first reading of which was approved by the Soviet parliament late last year.

This document defines the general principles of currency transactions in the domestic economic turnover and in the USSR's international settlement, the powers and functions of state bodies in currency regulation and currency resources management, the rights and obligations of Soviet and foreign citizens and legal entities as regards the ownership of currency and its use.

In presenting the bill, Yuriy Blokhin, deputy chairman of the parliamentary Committee for Economic Reform, said that "the law proceeded from the unity of currency, the currency system and the currency territory of the country."

Under the law, which enters into force on April 1, the rouble is recognised as the only means of payment on the USSR's territory. It bans the use of foreign currency as a means of payment on the entire territory of the country "to maintain the stability of the rouble's purchasing power."

The import of roubles and Soviet securities to the USSR from abroad as well as their export from the USSR are prohibited.

Blokhin told deputies that the parliament received conclusions on the bill from the parliaments of the Ukraine, Belorussia, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Georgia. On the whole, he said, they expressed support for the bill "as the necessary legal basis +for the currency market in the country."

In addition, he said, the bill was sent, although unofficially, to experts at the international monetary fund and the international monetary chamber, which "as a whole, also assessed the bill positively."

In the afternoon, deputies will discuss the ecological problems of the Aral Sea.

Adopts Decree on Aral Sea

LD0103214791 Moscow TASS in English 2132 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS legislative correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow March 2 TASS—The Soviet parliament proclaimed as all-Union task that of improving the hygienic and epidemiological conditions of the population's life, the social and ecological situation in districts adjoining the Aral Sea.

Speaking in parliament, Kakimbek Salykov, chairman of the parliamentary Committee on Ecology, described the Aral problem as the biggest ecological catastrophe on the globe and said that the ecological situation in the region got out of control. He said that emergency situation has formed in the Aral area in every sphere of life, that the living conditions and health of the population are rapidly deteriorating and that the population's death rate and infant mortality increased.

Salykov said that 70-80 per cent of the population in the Aral area suffer from various diseases. The sea is no longer a source of fish. The climate in the region is rapidly worsening. The salt is swept from the dried-up seabed in increasing amounts and settles on the region.

Vitaliy Doguzhiyev, USSR first deputy prime minister, said that the Aral disaster is a result of a profound crisis of the regional economy. He said that the concentration of efforts on saving the Aral Sea, while the entire region is in a grave ecological and economic state, is doomed to failure.

The parliamentary decree suggests to draft an appeal to the world community to set up an international foundation for the restoration of the Aral Sea.

Marks Gorbachev's 60th Birthday

LD0103125791 Moscow TASS in English 1236 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS legislature correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—The Soviet parliament, at a joint meeting of its chambers, today paid tribute to President Mikhail Gorbachev on the eve of his 60th birthday due on March 2.

People's deputies cited the exceptional role of Gorbachev in the renewal of society and the pursuance of perestroyka. They praised his great contribution to eliminating confrontation in the international arena and ending the cold war, and emphasized Gorbachev's peace-making initiatives aimed at bringing about an end to hostilities in the Gulf.

Parliament Chairman Anatoliy Lukyanov said that, on behalf of the USSR Supreme Soviet, he would convey the deputies' congratulations to Mikhail Gorbachev on Saturday.

Committee Views Army FRG Withdrawal, Deserters

LD0103152791 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1102 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Andrey Zyuev report on USSR Supreme Soviet Committee for Defense and State Security session]

[Text] At a joint sitting of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities today, deputies continued their discussion of the composition of the Cabinet of Ministers and then gave the draft law on foreign currency regulation its second reading.

But I had the good luck, for the first time, to gain admission—not far away, a couple of paces from here—to a sitting of the USSR Supreme Soviet's Committee for Defense and State Security, where the ratification of the treaties between the USSR and the FRG, signed in September-November 1990, is being discussed. They are not run-of-the-mill treaties either, for us, for Germany, or for Europe.

As is known, the troop withdrawal is already under way. It has been planned in detail for this year and up to the end of 1994 roughly. I'll quote just a few figures. Over 43,000 of the 337,000 servicemen have already been withdrawn. And six of the divisions being withdrawn will be totally disbanded, since there is no room to station them anywhere. This was noted by Army General Moiseyev, chief of the General Staff. Twenty-one cantonments have already been vacated, but the buildings and real estate that have been handed over are not being used by the German side and are deteriorating. But we have not yet received any compensation for them.

I personally had not suspected that the question of desertion in the area would give rise to such interest among those attending the sitting. In this connection, [Soyuz group leader] Deputy Alksnis recalled that the authorities in the FRG's eastern laender have received instructions not to return any deserter from the Soviet side, but to move all of them to the western part of Germany, to the town of Eisenberg in the Land of Baden-Wuerttemberg, where a special screening center, SASA, has been set up.

Speaking about the problem of desertion, Defense Ministry spokesman pointed out that the social aspect is one of the spurs to these acts. But Deputy Sharin, who was presiding over the committee meeting, disagreed with this, objecting that seasoned officers as well as conscripts are running off.

It has been calculated that 11,000 trains will be needed to withdraw the Western Group of Forces. At a rate of four trainloads a day, Deputy Alksnis made a simple mathamatical calculation and pointed out that the chore would take about 8 years. Army General Moiseyev then noted that, owing to disagreements on this matter with the Polish side, the troop withdrawal is now taking place via the Navy and military air transport. People's deputies wanted to know whether, following the troop withdrawal from Germany in 1994, our state would still be out of pocket or not. But it emerged that no one knows.

KGB's Lebedev Presents State Security Bill

LD0203102691 Moscow TASS in English 1016 GMT 2 Mar 91

[By TASS legislative correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow March 2 TASS—The purpose, principles of activity, duties and rights of state security agencies and a system of control over their activities will be determined by a bill on state security agencies in the Soviet Union.

The bill was today discussed at a meeting of the Soviet parliament Commission for the Socio-Economic Development of the Union and Autonomous Republics, Autonomous Regions and Districts.

When presenting the bill, Valeriy Lebedev, deputy chairman of the USSR State Security Committee (KGB), emphasised that "it is for the first time in the history of our state that such a bill, which proclaims and openly defines principles for the activities of state security agencies, is being introduced without a security grading".

He said the KGB activities had been until now regulated by eight parliamentary acts and 800 governmental acts. "They all were classified", the KGB deputy chairman added, recognising that "many of them are not up to present-day requirements and hamper day-to-day work".

The passage of a state security bill which is to determine the KGB status in the system of state structures "will be an exceptionally vivid manifestation of glasnost and thereby build the people's trust in the KGB," Lebedev believes.

Under the bill, state security agencies are called upon to ensure the protection of the Soviet constitutional system, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the USSR, economic and defence potential of the country, rights and legitimate interests of citizens from the subversive activities of the secret services of foreign countries and organisations as well as from unlawful encroachments by individual groups and persons, Lebedev said.

Intelligence and counter-intelligence activities, the fight against organised crime, involvement in ensuring the keeping of state secrets, and the guarding of the state border are among the main functions of the KGB, he said.

The country's security is within the competence of the Union. Therefore the KGB coordinates and monitors the activities of the respective agencies of the subjects of the Federation, Lebedev emphasised.

Under the bill, the Soviet parliament and the president of the USSR exercise control over the activities of state security agencies while the USSR procurator-general and procurators subordinate to him supervise the observance of laws in the activities of the KGB agencies.

The first reading of the bill will be considered at a joint meeting of the Soviet parliament chambers on Tuesday, March 5.

Deputies Debate Press Law 'Disputes'

PM0403105391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Mar 91 Union Edition pp 1, 3

[Report by IZVESTIYA legislative correspondents A. Stepovoy and S. Chugayev: "New Appointments for Cabinet of Ministers"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] For the umpteenth time deputies devoted the final part of the sitting to discussing the operation of the Press Law in the country.

The debate was triggered by a question signed by 20 deputies, which was read out from the session rostrum by Deputy V. Shapovalenko. The document proposes that legislative hearings be held in connection with the interviews that Deputy V. Alksnis gave to ARGUMENTY I FAKTY and MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI inasmuch as these interviews, Shapovalenko said, indicate that the USSR president is involved in events in the Baltic.

In turn Deputy R. Ubaydullayeva expressed indignation at an article published in RUSSKIY VESTNIK. This article, the deputy said, insults the entire Uzbek people and presents the events in Fergana and Namangan in a distorted light. Ubaydullayeva considers that the article is designed to fuel interethnic dissension. In this connection the speaker voiced the opinion that parliament's Glasnost and Citizens' Rights and Appeals Committee should be enlisted to formulate an instrument to monitor glasnost and the press.

The speech was backed by Deputy D. Kugultinov. He demanded that attention also be drawn to the newspaper MEGAPOLIS-EKSPRESS.

Deputy S. Tsyplyayev voiced doubts as to the need to formulate an instrument to monitor glasnost and the press. He proposed that the opportunities to defend honor and dignity via the courts as envisaged by the Press Law be utilized. Especially since there is already experience in this respect, S. Tsyplyayev stressed.

The chairman also voiced his view of the problem. In R. Nishanov's opinion, one thing does not impede the other, and the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Supreme Soviet Presidium are entitled to interfere in the activity of and monitor the work of the mass media.

Concrete proposals were also voiced during the debate—for journalists to be deprived of accreditation at the Supreme Soviet for insulting deputies (Deputy V. Matyukha) and for a special legal service to be set up within the Supreme Soviet apparatus to defend deputies' honor and dignity (Deputy A. Krayko).

This is the umpteenth time that this kind of debate has broken out in the legislature. Above all else this indicates that there is a problem. And it has to be resolved. But in strict accordance with the law, as is customary in any democratic, rule-of-law state. Everything indicates that this idea was shared by most participants in the sitting who backed the proposal from I. Laptev, chairman of the Soviet of the Union, to appeal to the USSR Supreme Court for a definitive explanation of the clauses of the Press Law that are provoking disputes. [passage omitted]

Deputy Says Country 'Ready for Civil War'

LD2602025491 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1730 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent O. Vasilenko from 25 February USSR Supreme Soviet session]

[Text] Deputy Lyudmila Akopovna Arutyunyan spoke from the rostrum during the discussion of amendments to a draft decision on referendum in the USSR.

[Begin recording] [Arutyunyan] I would like to warn you against making a decision more severe. Let me give you

a tiny preamble to help me to prove my point. Three meetings which followed one another, apparently, show that the country is ready for civil war. Whereas before, three days ago—I understand that the hall does not find it pleasant to hear the truth, but I think that people in this hall should realize what is happening—whereas before, meetings with several thousand participants have been initiated only by one side, the day before yesterday we saw a meeting initiated by another side. I am far from discussing the rightfulness of these meetings. I state the fact that forces are ready, and are facing one another.

This means that social tension in the country has come to its culmination. This was the first thing. Second, a referendum held on 17 March will become a step which leads to further escalation of tension. Seven republics have already announced that they are not going to hold the referendum. I would like to ask Anatoliy Ivanovich [Lukyanov], or the Supreme Soviet for that matter, where we will find forces to ensure such a strict decision. Are we really going to bring tanks into all the republics? Is it worth shedding so much blood for a referendum?

I realize that some in this hall may say: Let's oppress them to the very end, and so on and so forth. But are we really trying to achieve this? Is it really possible to pay such a price for the Union which we are trying to preserve? I urge you not to make the decision any stricter, but to try to investigate the reasons and try to understand—and moreover, people who spoke here, I had a look, there were 11 people, and all of them—apart from Yudin; Yudin occupied a centrist position—all of them delivered one-sided speeches. We have not heard any representatives of the republics which decided not to hold the referendum. This is abnormal, because we are discussing all this today only to understand, not to condemn. The USSR Supreme Soviet must understand. That is why we should try to understand, not to laugh or cry.

Now, without even understanding why these republics turned down the idea of referendum, or how they formulated their refusal, we again decide to opress. If we are going to embark upon the path of ultimate confrontations, let's adopt decisions saying that we should oppress, punish, report to the procuracy, and bring in tanks. But if we really want to build the Union, let's cease our aspirations for confrontation, and let's give the republics an opportunity to find their bearings in a serious way.

I would like to make a forecast. It can happen that events will follow one of several scripts. The first script. Let me make a forecast.

[Lukyanov] I must say that these scripts have been published; that is why they are known.

[Arutyunyan] If the Supreme Soviet is not interested in what will happen as a result of actions taking place in this hall, I am satisfied. Let's adopt a decision which the Supreme Soviet thinks to be important. Nevertheless, I could not but fulfil my professional duty as a sociologist and as a deputy elected by voters. That is why I am grateful to you for letting me fulfil my duty. I said what I wanted. [end recording]

Gorbachev Decrees Confirm Appointments

Appoints Cabinet Ministers

LD0103202191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 1 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] Today we have received a USSR presidential decree on the appointment of Comrades [Lev] Ryabev, [Fedor] Senko, and [Vladimir] Shcherbakov as USSR deputy prime ministers, and also on the appointment of [Vitaliy] Konovalov as USSR minister of atomic energy and industry; [Grigoriy] Gabrielyants as USSR minister of geology; [Yuriy] Volmer as USSR minister of the maritime fleet; [Dmitriy] Yazov as USSR minister of defense; [Nikolay] Vorontsov as USSR minister of natural resources management and environmental protection; [Vladimir] Brezhnev as USSR minister of transport construction; [Yuriy] Semenov as USSR minister of power generation and electrification; and [Vladimir] Kryuchkov as chairman of the USSR Committee for State Security [KGB].

Appoints More Cabinet Ministers

LD0203162291 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Network in Russian 1545 GMT 2 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] The following appointments have been made today by decrees from USSR President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev:

Igor Vladimirovich Koksanov—USSR minister of the shipbuilding industry;

Gennadiy Georgiyevich Kudryavtsev—USSR minister of communications;

Sergey Gennadiyevich Lushchikov—USSR minister of justice;

Aleksandr Ivanovich Mikhalchenko—USSR minister of installation and special construction work;

Vyacheslav Ivanovich Chernoivanov—USSR minister of agriculture anf food;

And, Vladimir Ivanovich Shimko—USSR minister of the radio industry.

Political & Social

Gorbachev Meets Control Commission Presidium

PM0403115191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 Mar 91 Second Edition p 1

[TASS report: "Avoid Losing Political Initiative; Meeting With Leaders of CPSU Central Control Commission"]

[Text] A meeting between M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR president, and members of the CPSU Central Control Commission Presidium was held in Moscow 1 March. It was devoted to questions of the organizational strengthening of the party and enhancement of discipline in all its components from the CPSU Central Committee down to primary party organizations. These are the issues that have been submitted for discussion at the CPSU Central Control Commission [CCC] Plenum to be held 4 March.

During a comradely exchange of opinions M.S. Gorbachev noted that the party must not lose the political initiative; it is called upon to unite all genuinely democratic forces and movements. The position of the political center is a position of reliance on society's sensible forces. Life has shown that manifestations of extremism both on the left and the right are essentially destructive and ruinous.

Touching upon the activity of the party's control organs, M.S. Gorbachev emphasized their vital importance for the CPSU in the process of renewal. They must profess party comradeship rather than administer by injunction. They must act not as an inquisition but must serve as an intellectual and ideological support of the party and not begrudge time spent working with individual Communists. They must seek the ethical and moral purification of the party's ranks. Discipline in the party is not designed to intimidate, it is the result of firm ideological stances. By changing the internal image of the CPSU we enhance its attraction in the eyes of society. To this end there must be more precision, clarity, and determination in party policy. It must be clear to everyone who we are, what we advocate, and with whom we stand. In this respect it is important not to cut ourselves off, not to turn into a sect-like organization, but on the contrary to embark more boldly on contacts with other parties and movements, with anyone who is prepared to build rather than destroy. We must back publicists and journalists who dedicate their talent to perestroyka and genuine democracy.

Taking part in the meeting were O.S. Shenin, member of the Politburo and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Ye.N. Makhov, acting chairman of the CPSU CCC, and Deputy Chairmen G.G. Veselkov, Ye.A. Yeliseyev, and M.I. Kodin.

Power Struggle Against Gorbachev Viewed

LD0203102291 Moscow TASS in English 0938 GMT 2 Mar 91

[By TASS World Service news analyst Aleksandr Mineyev]

[Text] Moscow March 2 TASS—While at the meeting with intellectuals in Minsk President Mikhail Gorbachev persistently emphasised the danger of the single Soviet state's disintegration, his opponents in the Demokraticheskaya Rossiya Bloc proclaimed strengthening power structures in republics, primarily in Russia, and their sovereignties as a "logical plan of coming to power".

It would be naive to believe that the principal goal of the opposition is to divide the huge authoritarian-command system into several and even a multitude of small such systems, although objectively the "sovereignisation" process or, as Gorbachev put it, the "parade of sovereignties" is developing exactly in this direction.

But how can one understand the classical meaning of the struggle for the sovereignty "of Russia that in terms of its population and economic potential exceeds the rest of the republics, which really ensures to it the leading role in the Union?

At point is the struggle for power between the Soviet Communist Party and the conglomerate of political forces united by the anti-Communist ideology. The CPSU, which launched perestroyka, retains strong positions in the centre, although it renounced monopoly. Republican and local structures were formed later, when the crisis phenomena attending perestroyka made it easier for anti-Communists to come to power. Politically, the conflict between the centre and several republics is rooted in this difference.

The opposition cannot exercise power today by constitutional means even in areas where its repesentatives make up the majority in local governing councils. Therefore, it more frequently appeals directly to the people, organising rallies and demonstrations and emphasising their mass nature as proof of its influence. It projects peoples' emotional urge as a sensable expression of their will.

The events that occurred in the last ten days of February showed that the opposite wing of the political spectrum, specifically the conservative circles in the CPSU, have recourse to the same methods of struggle. Although they refrain from open attacks on the president at present, several publications, for instance the weeklies DEN and ROSSIISKIY VESTNIK, feature sharp criticism of his course.

Over the past week, both the president and the opposition made policy statements. The Demokraticheskaya Rossiya Bloc mounted a challenge to Gorbachev and named for the first time the segments of the population,

the exponent of whose interests it acts: private business, cooperatives, lease-holders and small business employees.

Mindful that the most conservative part of the CPSU orientates at the lowest floor of the social pyramid, the president should evidently be ranked now as belonging to the political centre: "One cannot skip in one leap from the authoritarian-command system to democracy, from the distributive economy to a market, from the unitary state to a federation of sovereign republics."

The public segments, on which the opposition relies to date, are not huge. But criticism impresses many who are simply dissatisfied with the ongoing fall in the living standards. The nationalist circles also line up with them.

On the other hand, having described emergent entrepreneurs as their base, "democrats" can scare off part of their supporters from the lower segments of society, who are embittered by the prospering of nouveauriches.

A year ago, the CPSU alone was held responsible for the declining standards of living. Today, this responsibility has to be shared by non-communist local governing councils, which have been in power for a long time but cannot solve vital problems and are embroiled in fruiteless political discussion at the local level.

For instance, the working group of the Leningrad Council shocked fellow citizens last week by publishing the draft "Constitution of the Leningrad (st. Russian) Republic", in which it set out the 18- page details of the status of the supposed new state of Europe.

In this situation, a referendum, which is scheduled to be held on March 17, risks to outgrow in regions, where the opposition is strong, not so much into a plebiscite on the future of the Union as into an arena of confrontation between the opposition and supporters of the CPSU, including centrists. Its results will, regrettably, trigger a new twist in the political struggle.

Gorbachev Call for Centrist Policy Viewed

LD0303061691 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Report by Aleksandr Zelenkov]

[Text] Today newspapers have published the text of the speech by Gorbachev in Mogilev on 28 February. This presidential speech in Belorussia is noted for one essential feature: For the first time the president emphatically expressed the idea that it is essential to take into account the views of opponents and to work out a centrist policy. A centrist policy, Gorbachev said, is a policy of reconciliation and taking into account the interests objectively existing in society. This statement is all the more noteworthy because, for all its triviality, the practical actions by the current presidential team—at any rate since abandoning the 500 days program—have been based on attempts to ignore the opinions of the democratic movement and the interests of cooperatives, farmers, and other social forces.

Over the past few months the president has effectively been building his policy on the basis of the ideas and concepts of the most conservative wing of our political sphere. A whole range of essentially antimarket decrees geared toward stifling the non-state economic sector, the attempt to use force to tackle the problems of the Baltic region, an unrestrained and unceremonious campaign of the discreditation of the Russian government and the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet and its chairman Boris Yeltsin—these are just the most conspicuous hallmarks of his policy.

The teaching of the political center favoring the conservative forces that Gorbachev used to represent has effectively led to the disappearance of the actual concept of a political center. There is no one left in the conservative center now, perhaps just the society Pamayat that is preaching its fascist ideology. Anyway, it was not the Pamyat society that sent the troops onto the streets of Vilnius. It is not fortuitous that the president decided not to deny the claims of and not to sue Colonel Alksnis, who publically accused the president in a newspaper of sanctioning the creation of national salvation committees and therefore of being responsible for bloodshed in the Baltic region. As a result of these actions, the possibility of compromise was effectively reduced to naught. The opposition forces and democratic movements whose opinions were consistently ignored have simply been forced to make their demands more radical.

Under conditions when the work of the Russian parliament and government was effectively blocked, Boris Yeltsin, who has been subjected to unprecedented attacks, harassment, and direct persecution, just did not have any way out, in my view, other than to appeal to the people directly by calling a spade a spade. Confrontation in society has reached its limit. One can only speculate what it can lead to.

In this situation, the appeal by the president to seek compromise and to take into account all the interests existing in society, the recognition of the fact that there are interests that are superior to the interests of any party, is definitely a positive sign.

Our country needs very much to form a new political center that will not be inclined to tackle political problems with the aid of the Army. The only important thing is that these declarations should not remain just meaningless words. Unfortunately, examples of this sort are still too fresh in the minds of many.

Republic CP's Urge Referendum 'Yes' Vote

PM0103165791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 1 Mar 91 Second Edition pp 1,2

[Appeal signed by A. Malofeyev, first secretary of the Belorussian Communist Party Central Committee, I.

Polozkov, first secretary of the RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee, and S. Gurenko, first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee: "For a Renewed Union; Appeal by the Central Committees of the Belorussian, Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, and Ukrainian Communist Parties to the Communists, All Working People, and Peoples of the USSR"]

[Text] We are at a critical moment in the life of our multinational fatherland. The social-political and economic crisis has reached the danger point. Antisocialist forces are openly seeking to change the state system in the country and destroy the USSR.

For centuries our country has existed, lived, and developed as an integral, multinational state. Its history is complex and multifacated. Together we have experienced joy and grief and shared successes and difficulties and mortal dangers, and the very fate of our peoples has depended on their cohesion. Because of this our homeland has survived many misfortunes and upheavals, including those of the past seven decades and more. The common tragedies and suffering did not break our spirit; on the contrary they tempered our will and strengthened our unity. Our fatherland is the common home of many peoples, whose friendship and fraternal cooperation are based on thousands of economic, cultural, and human ties.

However, the truth about our country's past and present is drowning in the flood of vilification and fabrication poured forth by those who masquerade as "democrats" but abuse glasnost and pluralism, deliberately oppose the socialist choice, distort the goals of perestroyka, unleash political and moral terror in society, and sow enmity and hatred within it. The ideas of internationalism, the great gains of socialism, and our peoples' cooperation over the centuries are being eradicated from people's minds.

Our people must stick together at this complex and critical time. Only a friendship rooted deep in the past will help overcome the present ordeals and make Soviet people's lives happy and worthy of contemporary civilization.

In urging active participation in the 17 March 1991 referendum we are advocating a renewed Union of equal sovereign Soviet socialist republics in which the rights and freedoms of people of all nationalities will be fully guaranteed.

As we see it, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is:
—a reliable guarantor of the statehood and free sovereign development of the republics comprising it, of the safeguarding of their territorial integrity, and of equality and justice for all the peoples;
—the most natural path for us toward the stabilization of the economy and transition to a regulated market while ensuring social guarantees for the population;
—the only possible way of avoiding further serious upheavals in interethnic relations and achieving civic accord;
—a sound basis for the development of national languages and cultures and their interaction in the interests of the flourishing of each of the peoples;
—the guarantee for every family of a strong material and moral status, personal safety, and a sure future;
—finally, the consolidation of the positive changes in world politics and the strengthening of the Union's defense capability in accordance with the new military doctrine.

In advocating a renewed Union the communist parties of Belorussia, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR], and the Ukraine appeal to the Supreme Soviets and governments of their republics to be the first to sign the Union Treaty, thus initiating an act of great trust and wisdom at the most dramatic stage in the life of the Soviet peoples.

As parties confident of the vast but as yet untapped potential of socialism, as parties whose goals are linked primarily to working people's aspirations, we appeal to the citizens of all sovereign republics, autonomous entities, and national okrugs to comprehensively assess the consequences of the referendum results for their own peoples and the peoples of the USSR and the whole world and to express themselves unequivocally in favor of unity, in favor of preserving the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Everyone of honest heart and independent mind, everyone who sets store by a citizen's duty, conscience, and responsibility must remember that a united Union is the sole guarantee of the prosperity of present and future generations. Remember that on your choice depend the fate and life of every Soviet family, of every individual.

We urge you on national referendum day to make the correct political and moral choice—vote for the preservation of the Union.

When participating in the referendum:

Remember the rich experience of the philanthropy and fraternal mutual assistance, friendship and mutual understanding that have united our peoples at the most difficult times!

Remember the joint sacrifices made on the altar of our peoples' freedom when repulsing fascist aggression!

Remember the joint labor that created the mighty economic, scientific-technical, and intellectual potential and the social gains that have enabled us for many years to view the future with confidence!

But do not forget the enemies of our friendship and of our Union, those who are sowing enmity and distrust and pushing us, our children, and future generations into the abyss of new ordeals.

Let us confirm that we are the worthy sons and daughters of our peoples. Let us not allow oursleves to be misled by political intriguers and demagogues.

Let us put our trust in our people's political and life experience and their common sense and ability to make a sensible choice in the referendum, the only correct choice: Let us say a firm "Yes" to a renewed Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

[Signed] A. Malofeyev, first secretary of the Belorussian Communist Party Central Committee
I. Polozkov, first secretary of the RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee
S. Gurenko, first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee

Republic, Union Officials Discuss Union Treaty

LD0103204191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Report by correspondent A. Kraminov, from the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] The first stage of talks by republican plenipotentiary representatives working on the draft of the new Union treaty is coming to an end. The participants met with leaders of the USSR Supreme Soviet. The basis for discussion was the text of the so-called presidential variant, so-called because the original draft of the treaty contained ideas expressed at the Council of the Federation and only formulated by the staff of the apparatus of the head of state.

The draft was defined more precisely, added to, and developed to a significant degree by the representatives of eight Union and 18 autonomous republics. Alternative variants have been proposed for some articles, but it was not possible to achieve agreement on a small number of articles. Some Union republics, for example, spoke out categorically against the autonomies being given political rights equal to theirs, afraid that in such an event the federation, of which these national formations form a part, will receive a significant advantage in deciding questions of principle.

The meeting's participants asked Anatoliy Ivanovich Lukyanov, Ivan Dmitriyevich Laptev, and Rafik Nishanovich Nishanov to speak on this problem, and also on an aspect, as yet not completely developed, connected to the future structure of the Union legislature and the USSR Constitution.

[Begin Lukyanov recording] If you are counting on confrontation—that there are 10 votes there and one vote here, and we must proceed from this kind of equality—then this is one approach. Then let us work on this approach. If you are counting on normal, good relations being established, under pressure from the peoples and not from the authorities, then everything will be in order. [end recording]

[Kraminov] The draft Union treaty prepared by the republic representatives will be sent to the Council of the Federation for examination.

[Begin recording] [Kraminov] Anatoliy Ivanovich, I understand that it is still too early to give an evaluation of the document being created here, but I think it is time to evaluate the work already done.

[Lukyanov] Well, I listened attentively to the comrades today. We discussed—quite sharply discussed—those questions which have not yet been solved. They really are complicated questions. But I can say that the comrades have carried out a great deal of work, and this bears out over and over again that in our Union there are no questions which cannot be solved through good will. [end recording]

Democratic Congress Council Session Opens

LD0303041191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1542 GMT 2 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Igor Agabekov and Igor Gvritishviliy]

[Text] Moscow, 2 Mar (TASS)—The discussion of the political situation in the country, elaborating the approach to the all-Union referendum, and setting up an extensive "antitotalitarian coalition"—such is the agenda of a two-day session of the consultative council of the Democratic Congress (DC), which opened today.

Taking part are representatives from over 30 parties and movements from 11 Union republics, including one of the leaders of the Estonian Popular Front, the prime minister of this Baltic republic, Edgar Savisaar, the chairman of the People's Rukh of the Ukraine Drach, representatives of the Democratic Russia movement, representatives of the Lithuanian Sajudis, and others.

Vladimir Lysenko, one of the leaders of the Democratic Congress, a people's deputy of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] parliament and cochairman of the RSFSR republican party, told TASS correspondents that a question of the publication of a joint inter-republican newspaper and the setting up of their own news agency will also be examined at the consultative council session.

Touching upon the question of the forthcoming referendum on the future of the USSR, which is to take place on 17 March, Vladimir Lysenko said that DC advocates "not the union that is being set up from above, but a true concord of sovereign states that is being set up horizontally from below."

Speeches Request Consolidation

LD0303041391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1958 GMT 2 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Igor Agabekov and Igor Gritishviliy]

[Text] Moscow, 2 Mar (TASS)—The first speeches made at the consultative council session of the Democratic Congress (DC), opening today in Moscow, so far have

only verified the alienation among the parties and movements in opposition to the CPSU. Representatives of 30 different parties and movements from 11 republics are taking part in the session.

"The links between the Russian and Estonian democrats obviously have slackened recently," admitted Edgar Savisaar, a leader of the Estonian People's Front and prime minister of that Baltic republic. A number of other speeches expressed the thought that the Baltics have turned their backs on the "democratic" movements in other republics.

The speakers spoke in succession about the need for consolidation and that it is only anticommunism that has been proposed as the basis for this. No constructive proposals have been voiced in the speeches by over 20 people today, who sounded as if they were delivering their own opinions.

The consultative council will continue its work tomorrow.

Oposition to Referendum Voiced

LD0303202391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1831 GMT 3 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Igor Agabekov and Igor Gvritishvili]

[Text] Moscow, 3 Mar (TASS)—The basic program for the near future of the Democratic Congress, whose sitting completed its work in Moscow today, is comprised of the creation of a broad-based opposition occupying anticommunist positions, the waging of a propaganda campaign against the all-Union referendum on 17 March, and opposition to the signing of the new Union treaty. According to confirmed data, representatives of 21 political parties and organizations from 11 of the country's Union republics took part in it.

At a news conference which took place after the end of the sitting, its organizers maintained that "complete unity was demonstrated" with regard to all of the basic issues on the agenda. With the aim of implementing their program, those taking part in the sitting of the consultative council adopted a decision to call an interrepublican parliamentary conference in Moscow 21-23 April for the elaboration and adoption of a draft "treaty of community between sovereign states as an alternative to the draft Union treaty." In this regard, the consultative council adopted an appeal to the supreme soviets and to democratic factions in the supreme soviets calling upon them to support the idea of holding this conference.

The leaders of the Democratic Congress informed journalists that its supporters in all of the country's republics and oblasts had begun an active campaign directed toward disruption of the all-Union referendum, although they have acknowledged that the desired result will be achieved far from everywhere.

Political Resolution Issued

LD0303121291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 0500 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] The first meeting of the Democratic Congress Consultative Council was held in Moscow on 2 March. Twenty-two parties from 11 republics, including ones like Democratic Russia, RUKH, the Belorussian Popular Front, and others, were represented. According to the political resolution adopted by the meeting, the Council calls for the consolidation of all free-thinking citizens who do not want a relapse into repressive dictatorship and the unleashing of civil war.

The Democratic Congress expressed its support for the policies of Boris Yeltsin and Ivan Silayev. Attempts to set up various Committees for National Salvation were denounced as illegal.

On the fundamental question of the Union Treaty, the Council asked the legislature of all republics to hold an interrepublican leigslative conference in Moscow at the end of April. The task of this conference would be to discuss the entire range of problems involved in strengthening horizontal links and in preparing and concluding a treaty of concord between sovereign states which want such a thing. In this way, democratic forces are for the first time openly stating their wish to create a reinvigorated Union without the participation of the old center, and that they have the means to carry this out.

Lukyanov, Others Debate Union Treaty

PM0403101191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 1 Mar 91 Second Edition p 3

[Report by V. Shirokov: "Hot in Morozovka"]

[Text] Representatives of union republics and former autonomous entities are still hard at work peparing the Union Treaty in Morozovka, Moscow Oblast.

The biggest debate was over articles 1, 10, and 11, which define who the actual components of the federation are, as well as the procedure for joining the Union and conditions for the formation of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

A.I. Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, I.D. Laptev, chairman of the Soviet of the Union, and R.N. Nishanov, chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities, participated in this fruitful debate yesterday evening.

Union Treaty Talks Detailed

LD0103143191 Moscow TASS in English 1409 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—USSR parliament Chairman Anatoliy Lukyanov on Thursday met the plenipotentiary representatives of republics who are involved in the talks on the preparation of the text of a

new Union treaty. The meeting was also attended by Ivan Laptev and Rafik Nishanov, chairmen of the Soviet parliamentary chambers.

During the meeting, speakers cited a large amount of work done by the negotiators. It remains to coordinate a small number of articles which nevertheless include important provisions that determine the character of the document in many respects.

There was a frank and at times keen exchange of opinions about aspects of the document which have not yet been finally elaborated, such as, in particular, the structure of a future federal parliament, a constitution of the USSR, and forms in which the subjects of the federation would participate in the treaty.

At the request of representatives of republics, the Soviet parliament leaders set out their understanding of approaches to these problems.

They emphasised that the building of the Union should be based on the cultivation of countrywide interests and objectives, not on confrontation, and point out that the creation of a new Union treaty is a historic stage in the development of the Soviet Union.

The discussion of the treaty fostered a new approach when delegates from union and autonomous republics, which proclaimed their sovereignty, have met at the negotiating table on an equal basis, speakers noted.

At the same time speakers voiced confidence that the sovereignty of the subjects of the federation would actually grow stronger after the treaty is signed.

Lukyanov Interviewed on Union Referendum

LD0203112191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Interview with USSR Supreme Soviet Chairman Anatoliy Lukyanov by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Anatoliy Ivanovich, our country and people are on the threshold of a very big and important event—I mean the upcoming referendum on 17 March which is meant to decide the fate of our country. The main question put forward for the union-wide referendum has been formulated as follows: Do you think it necessary to preserve the USSR as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics, in which the rights and freedoms of a person of any nationality will be fully guaranteed? How can you characterize the thesis of a renewed federation of equal republics? This is especially important so that people going to the referendum to know what they are voting for.

[Lukyanov] We discussed the wording of the referendum for a long time at the Supreme Soviet session. No doubt, we are talking about a renewed union because this is a union of not only equal and sovereign republics, this is also a union of republics endowed with considerably wider powers. These are republics able to be fully in charge of their resources on their territory, these are republics able to play a very weighty part in the activity of union bodies; that is, we want to build a renewed federation, a federation that fully corresponds to the present stage of the development of our country, the more so as the majority of the republics have already now stated these principles in their declarations and, evidently, it will be a union of republics, including both former union and former autonomous republics, a union which will embody the unity of the Soviet peoples.

Left Centrists Issue Statement on Gulf Situation

LD0203225191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1955 GMT 2 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Igor Agabekov]

[Text] Moscow, 2 Mar (TASS)—The left-centrist radical bloc of the political parties and movements has demanded that the restoration of the Iraqi regime in its previous form not be permitted, that imbalance in the economic development of the Near East countries be eliminated, and that the probability of production of weapons of mass destruction by them be excluded.

At a sitting in Moscow today, the leaders of this public organization made a statement that neutral zones must be set up in the region, demilitarization of the countries of the Near East must be achieved, and policies of neutrality and nonalignment to military blocs must be conducted by them.

A tragedy had to be played, it is noted in the statement, and this took place in accordance with the designs of the directors of the military show. In connection with this, the radical bloc has come out in favor of the cessation of the struggle for Near East oil, elimination of the regional grounds causing the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries, an equitable division of territory and the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people "to friendly autonomy from Tel Aviv," and the exclusion in the future of a military presence in the Near East by the superpowers. The leaders of the bloc have come out in favor of the speedy withdrawal of allied troops from the Persian Gulf after the resolution of the immediate tasks of the stabilization of the region.

Having noted the Soviet Union's positive role in the resolution of the conflict, those taking part in the sitting expressed the hope that relations between the USSR and the United States would be developed further.

Prokofyev on Lithuania, Referendum Issues

LD2802235391 Warsaw PAP in English 2253 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Warsaw, Feb. 28—Sizing up Polish-Soviet economic relations, Soviet Communist Party official said he considered the switching over to hard currency clearings premature.

Speaking about Lithuanian problems, First Secretary of the Moscow CPSU Committee Yuriy Prokofev said at a news conference at the Soviet Embassy here today that according to present Lithuanian leaders, Lithuania could gain independence only within the 1939 borders, without the Vilnius district, Klaipeda and five regions that became part of Belorussia.

Prokofev stressed that the rising of the Vilnius residents resulted in stimulating anti-communism throughout the USSR.

Prokofev did not give a clear answer to a question about the consequences of a boycott of a referendum in the USSR by seven republics. But he said that the three republics: Lithuania, Georgia and Armenia would opt against staying within the USSR. So far, the stand of Latvia, Estonia and Moldavia has been uncertain and the remaining republics would opt for staying within the USSR, he said.

Food Crisis in Moscow Reported Worsening

LD0103162791 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] A deeply worrying situation has developed in Moscow owing to the poor supply of food. The delivery of meat to the city, for example, has virtually stopped, and the 30,000 tonnes in storage may suffice for only a week. This was said at a sitting of the city's Anti-Crisis Committee. Singled out among the main causes of the difficult position that has taken shape was the blatant failure to honor commitments in Moscow oblast and a number of other oblasts. For example, instead of the 80 tonnes of milk specified by the state order, Ryazan Oblast daily supplies the capital with no more than seven tonnes.

A decision was also adopted to urgently create teams of deputies and leaders of the City Executive Committee who will travel to the localities for talks. At the same time, it was decided to send a letter to the USSR president with an urgent request to immediately consider the question of Moscow's food supply.

Moscow City Soviet on Capital's Budget

LD2802185291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1720 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow, 27 Feb (TASS)—The deputies of the Moscow City Soviet today discussed the capital's budget for the current year.

A Health Commission proposal was adopted on the allocation of additional funds for the health serice, taking into account an increase in wages for medical workers by 40 percent. The main demands of the strike committee of medical workers were reflected in this decision of the soviet.

At the same time, the deputies did not agree to additional allocations for public education, reasoning that R500 million more is being allocated in the new budget for the needs of education compared to last year.

When tabling for discussion the expenditure for transportation, Yuriy Luzhkov, chairman of the Moscow executive soviet, tried to get the deputies to agree to a threefold increase on urban transportation fares at present the fare on urban transportation is five kopecks. He justified his proposal by the need to support the industry financially, taking into account the deteriorated state of its infrastructure.

Despite support for Yuriy Luzhkov's position by the transportation subcommittee, deputies voted for an amendment to the budget, calling for no changes in fares in passenger transportation in Moscow.

The deputies, in protecting the interests of their electorate, tabled about 200 amendments to the draft budget, which strengthen its social side. The executive committee agreed to many of them, even during its preliminary discussion of the draft in the Moscow soviet commissions. Tomorrow the session will continue its work.

Moscow Leaders To Cable Gorbachev

LD0103232891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1456 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Igor Agabekov]

[Excerpts] Moscow, 1 Mar (TASS)—The capital's leaders have adopted a decision to send a letter to USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev, insistently requesting he urgently consider questions concerning food supply in Moscow, to oblige all suppliers to repay their Goszakaz loans, to earmark means to purchase from abroad unprocessed meat, milk powder, and also other types of food, reserves of which could run out in the capital by the middle of April. This was reported at a meeting of the city anticrisis committee held here today. Moscow usually receives products in accordance with stock deliveries regulated by the center. The situation in which Moscow finds itself because of poor meat and milk supplies is more than alarming, it was noted at the meeting. "We have reached the point where we must speak of a food blockade in the city, and the need to rescue it," Yuriy Luzhkov, chairman of the Moscow City Soviet Executive Committee said in his speech. Meat supplies to the city have effectively stopped, while the 30,000 tonnes of meat stored in warehouses will last not more than a week. [passage omitted]

A decision was adopted to rugently create brigades of deputies and leaders from the City Executive Committee to visit local areas for talks.

Discussion of KGB Bill Reviewed

LD0303015791 Moscow World Service in English 2110 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] What status should the USSR State Security Committee, the KGB, have in a democratic state? A new

law on the KGB is to provide an answer. The USSR Supreme Soviet's commission for the social and economic development of Union and autonomous republics discusses the bill on the KGB on Saturday. Ivan Pankov has more in this commentary:

Before any bill can be submitted to the national parliament, which is the Supreme Soviet, it must be examined in a number of parliamentary committees and commissions first. This has become standard practice in this country and the bill on the KGB is no exception. It is common knowledge that the aims and methods of the security service in any country reflect the nature of the state of which they are part. And this applies in full to the KGB. Democratization, glasnost, and the intention to bring into being a state ruled by law have required a different security service and several versions of the bill have been drafted, some by the KGB staff. The bill examined today is a combination of several options.

A statement by the deputy chairman of the KGB, Valeriy Lebedev, was central to Saturday's hearing in the commission and this is what the official said about the bill:

What are the most important and crucial aspects of our activity in the eyes of the public? In the first place, we believe that the new law must be passed to safeguard the rights and interests of citizens and ensure the lawful application of special methods and means by the KGB in its activities. For the first time in history, the bill openly reviews the KGB's main areas of activity. Before, the State Security Committee relied mostly on classified legal acts. Their wording was rather vague, said the KGB official, and that was fraught with the temptation of getting ahead of legislation, at least by half a step. History has shown that that must not happen by any means because it can lead to a tragedy and it did lead to tragedies in the past. We can strictly abide by the laws and probably even fall behind a little in order to assess the new laws first.

The lack of a special law on the KGB and its secrecy maintained a gap between the security service and the people. All KGB staffs are in favor of an open constitutional law. When the law is passed, the Soviet people will be able to compare the KGB's activities with the law and keep them under control.

About the KGB's activities in the context of sovereignty proclaimed by the republic, Valeriy Lebedev said this:

The law describes the KGB agencies of the USSR as an integral and united system. The USSR KGB will coordinate the activities of republican security agencies in handling questions concerning the Union. Incidentally, the draft Union treaty contains precisely this formula.

Valeriy Lebedev agreed with the interpretation of glasnost in the bill. Glasnost cannot be full. For instance, the bill says that all information about the private life of citizens must be secret. It can be used only in keeping with the letter of law. Under the bill, the KGB's activities will be monitored by the USSR Supreme Soviet, the president, and the prosecutor general. The bill on the bodies of state security in the USSR will undergo its first reading in the USSR Supreme Soviet on Tuesday.

Poll Shows 71 Percent Favor Federation

LD0203233591 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2203 GMT 2 Mar 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Excerpts] The opinion service [as heard] carried out a poll in Moscow on the forthcoming 17 March referendum on the future of the union. A total of 71 percent favored preserving the USSR as a renewed federation, and 13.5 percent of those polled were against. [passage omitted]

Economic

Pavlov Favors Foreign Help in Economic Projects

LD0303130391 Moscow World Service in English 1200 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] The Soviet prime minister Valentin Pavlov favored the participation of foreign experts in the drafting of economic projects and in management. Mr. Pavlov recalled, in a media interview, the government had invited experts of various countries to help prepare the program of transition to a market. Any experience is useful, Pavlov feels. Yet he warned against applying other people's experience to Soviet conditions mechanically. He supported the idea of having joint ventures run directly by foreigners. At the same time, it would be useful if they had Soviet experts as co-directors. Foreign experience in pure form may prove not enough for work in the Soviet Union, the premier noted.

Plans for New Prices on Goods Revealed

LD0403044291 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] This is Russia's Radio news service and I am Aleksandr Shashkov. As I said earlier, and as I promised, I will now acquaint you with a very interesting document. I think that the basic theme that people are now concerned with is not the referendum, or anything else, not the war in the Persian Gulf, but the coming price rises, which no one has any doubt about any more.

We have received through our channels a very interesting document from the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. It is the instructions of the USSR State Committee for Prices on preparations for new price lists, dated 15 February 1991. This document contains a total of 58 pages, but we have received only an abbreviated version. I ask your forgiveness in advance for the long list, but it is a serious and severe document, and I simply want to inform you of what is awaiting us to judge from the instructions of the USSR State Committee for Prices.

The following Soviet-made and imported goods are switched to contract, free prices: Linen fabric, tablecloths, bedspreads, furnishing silks, curtains, pure wool fabrics, fashionable leather shoes, carpets, leather accessories, high quality imported sewn and knitwear goods, leather clothes, watches, computers, refrigerators over 250 liters, expensive washing machines, vacuum cleaners, radio instruments, ballpoint pens, phonograph records, telephones, photographic and cinematographic items, radiators, household items of wood and metal, mirrors, plastic items, stainless steel crockery, gardening and musical items, radios of the second class, motorcycles and bicycles, vehicle spare parts, bathroom fittings, and radio spare parts. Contract, free prices are to be introduced for those goods.

The following will be sold at firm [tverdiy] retail prices: new fashionable fabrics, fur collars, vehicles, sawn material and sawn material for building, refrigerators up to 250 liters, radios of the third and fourth classes, televisions of the second and third generations, specific items of furniture, wallpaper, summer houses, minitractors and motorized tractor units [motoblok], and local building material.

The latter list will be sold at firm retail prices. At the same time, there are plans to raise prices on dressmaking and velvet fabrics threefold, denim and lawn by 3.5 times, sheets by 1.7 times, linen fabric by 4-5 times, silk fivefold, yarn by 2-2.5 times, children's clothes by 2-3 times, school uniforms fivefold, woollen goods twofold, silk goods by 3.5 times, linen goods fourfold, cotton by 3.5 times, and imported goods by 2.5 times. Children's cotton clothes are to go up threefold, linen ones fourfold, imported ones by 3.5 times. Cotton shirts and trousers are going up threefold, linen ones by 3.7 times, wool ones threefold, imported ones 2.5 times. Hats for adults are going up by 2.5 times, for children threefold. Cotton knitwear, stockings, and socks up by 2.4 times, wool socks by 2.3 times, children's socks fourfold. Knitted underwear is to go up threefold, leather shoes twofold, imported shoes by 2.5 times, children's shoes threefold, and shoes of Russian leather threefold. Fabric coats with fur linings are going up twofold.

There remains one last part—motor vehicles. Vehicles are going up: the LuAZ by 1.3 times; ZAZ 968, Moskovich 412, (IzhKombi) AZLK 21-41—meaning a Moskvich—and the Volga GAZ 24-10 by 1.6 times; the Zhigulis 6,7,8, and 9 by 1.7 times; the Zhigulis 4 and 5 by 1.8 times; and the VAZ 11-11 Niva and ZAZ 11-02-06 by 2.2 times.

I repeat that those were instructions from the USSR State Committee for Prices for the preparations for new official price lists dated 15 February 1991. You know, it reminds me of an old joke: Life gets more expensive; yes, but it isn't an essential item.

Agricultural

Communists Urged To Lead Rural Reforms

PM0103110191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 Feb 91 Second Edition pp 1-2

[Special correspondents M. Kryukov and A. Platoshkin report under the "Theme of the Day" rubric: "Do Not Shirk the Challenge"]

[Text] Rostov-na-Donu—The sun rises higher and higher above the snow-clad fields. Soon it will be spring...

What will spring be like? Will we cope with the sowing? Will we develop private farms, cooperatives, and private farmsteads alongside the collective farms [kolkhoz] and state farms [sovkhoz]? Will it be possible to achieve a breakthrough in the rural economy and finally improve the food supply? These questions worry everyone today.

They were also discussed in detail at the all-union seminar-conference held recently in Rostov-na-Donu. Secretaries of union republic communist party central committees, oblast party committees, and kray party committees and leaders of farms, enterprises, ministries, and departments discussed progress in implementing decisions on political support for the development of a mixed economy and various forms of management in the country's agro-industrial complex in conditions of the transition to the market.

Ye.S. Stroyev, member of the Politburo and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, delivered a speech in which he noted that the recent joint plenum of the CPSU Central Committee and Central Control Commission had resolutely advocated the irreversibility of transformations in the country, the switch to market relations, and the development of a mixed economy while preserving the priority of collective forms of ownership.

However, the progress of the reform is complex and contradictory. Many negative processes have developed, too. In particular, the fall in the production growth rate and the nonfulfillment of supply commitments. Add to that inflation, exaggerated demand, and abuses in trade. Such is the overall picture.

Of course, it is not typical of all regions. The situation is better in places where party committees are working actively on the economy in conjunction with local soviets. Across the country as a whole the volume of agricultural gross output and the production of foodstuffs have increased. This is true in particular of farms in Stavropol Kray and Belgorod, Lipetsk, Orel, Rostov, Lugansk, Brest, Tselinograd, and a number of other oblasts. There are also regions where the volume of production has even fallen. Particularly in the Baltic and Transcaucasian republics. An extraordinary situation has also occurred in which townspeople have refused to help the countryside gather in the harvest.

The member of the Politburo and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee highlighted the main reasons for the difficulties with food. Generally speaking it has still not proved possible to drastically alter production relations or give greater independence to farms and the actual producers. Decisions on the priority of the agro-industrial complex in questions of capital investments and material resources are not being fulfilled. Additional difficulties have been created by the imperfect financial mechanism. This has again led to a violation of price parity between industrial and agricultural produce.

All this is not just an economic ailment. This is also a reflection of the traditionally parasitical attitudes toward the countryside and an unwillingness to investigate the calamitous state there. The CPSU must show the political will and tactical wisdom to overcome the situation. The countryside will gain nothing from the hysterics, the cries of panic, and the search for the "extreme" some leaders of the newly formed parties, tendencies, and groups are engaging.

Rostov-na-Donu The seminar participants examined in detail the practical work being done to develop a mixed rural economy. This theme has been an arena of fierce struggle and all manner of political speculation. The CPSU Central Committee's position is that there should be scope for all forms of economic management and ownership. There must be equal conditions for them, with a single support mechanism, and effective trends must be defined and developed.

The mixed economy has already gained acceptance in many areas in the country. For example, over 35,000 kolkhozes and sovkhozes have taken up lease relations in one form or another. Primary cooperatives, family-run private farms, and specialized links are being formed. And farms themselves are being transformed into associations of various kinds.

That was the theme discussed by participants in the seminar, particularly I. Bova, director of Rostov's "Aksay" agricultural combine, M. Chartayev, chairman of a Dagestan kolkhoz, and others.

The participants in the seminar have gained quite a lot of instructive experience in Rostov Oblast. There are more than 6,000 lease collectives and family farms here. In the past 5 years gross agricultural production has risen by 70 percent. Last year, Rostov farmers harvested 9.3 million tonnes of grain. They sold 4 million tonnes to the state. Including around 1 million tonnes above the order.

The oblast's Communists are taking an active stance in mastering the new forms of economic management. Some 3,000 agricultural specialists, the majority of whom are party members, have joined lease teams and almost one-half of them have been elected leaders. The Communists' unifying role is evident here. The seminar participants could see that for themselves. They visited Matveyevo-Kurganskiy Rayon. Party rayon committee first secretary N. Senchenko, rayon soviet executive committee chairman V. Donchenko, economic leaders, and deputies are working well together. Inquisitive and resourceful people find support here. At the "Pobeda" kolkhoz and the "Matveyevo-Kurganskiy" sovkhoz the guests acquainted themselves with the evolution in lease relations. New organizational structures are being formed within farms. This in turn leads to a higher level of autonomy on the part of primary labor collectives.

On the "Matveyevo-Kurganskiy" sovkhoz, for example, economically accountable subunits have taken out a long-term lease on all the land, livestock, and other means of production. Ties between the public-sector farm and the private farmstead are developing actively. The collective has really managed to set about transforming the state enterprise into an association of independent peasant holdings and cooperatives. And now the collectives, which comparatively recently still lagged behind, are moving ahead in terms of agricultural production.

This of course does not mean that everything in the garden is rosy down Rostov way. The countryside here is suffering from the same "ailments" as other places. And the city's stores are, unfortunately, not marked by an abundance of foodstuffs either...

There was an examination of the experience of creating joint-stock companies and people's enterprises by buying up fixed assets, of cooperation between the city and the countryside, and of the creation of joint associations and combines. Peasant holdings and private farms came in for serious analysis. There are already more than 40,000 of them in the country. Many party committees are actively promoting the formation of such farms and are helping them to obtain land and resources.

The improvement of production relations in the countryside and their mixed nature, as I. Grintsov, secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee; A. Ikramov, secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party Central Committee; Yu. Belyy, secretary of the Stavropol CPSU kray committee, and others, noted, is an objective necessity. Political approaches are needed of the kind that will help to actively develop all forms of economic management. The task of party committees is to help determine the choice and support innovation.

The foundation of a mixed economy is land reform. The party's attitude to it, as Ye.S. Stroyev noted, is expressed in the decisions of its congress and plenums. The CPSU expresses solidarity with the recent decree by the country's President. The party supports the transfer of the land into the ownership of those who want to work on it. But for people to actually receive the land and the reform to move ahead on a large scale there is still quite a lot of work to be done here: The land inventory must be completed without delay and the new landowners must be helped to stand on their own feet.

Rostov-na-Donu but how is the agro-industrial complex to "grow accustomed" to the market? The new wholesale prices for equipment are hitting people's pockets hard in

the countryside. There is still no mechanism to compensate for the rising cost of resources. Farms' losses are rising and their interest in increasing the production of grain, meat, and milk is falling. Exchange in kind is increasing in scale constantly.

There must be a single all-union market in which the peasant can buy the means of production but the state retains the right to monitor and regulate such relations. The government has adopted a decision to allocate resources directly to the agro-industrial complex this year. Some will go to the countryside through wholesale trade, auctions, and stock exchanges. Such measures will have a positive influence.

Nevertheless, as the seminar noted, we cannot seriously hope for sufficiency in food without pursuing a protectionist policy toward the countryside. At the moment it is merely stated. Soviets have been given the opportunity to regulate the situation autonomously at local level but are making poor use of it at present.

Thus structural changes in the country's economy and targeted comprehensive programs are needed. Also, cadres capable of implementing these changes. To preserve their influence among the peasantry, Communists must strive to improve their working and living conditions.

The fundamental question is to cut output losses. The vital link in this chain is processing and the food industry. In those places where proper attention has been paid to this question the production of goods has increased and the range of goods has expanded. But what about across the country as a whole? In the past year work has been completed at an average of only one-third of the 249 food industry projects nearing completion. Dozens of imported lines for the production of confectionery, margarine, processed cheese, quick-frozen and other produce have not been commissioned yet.

The primitive state of equipment and technology in the agro-industrial complex cannot be eliminated without the organic combination of new production relations with the achievements of scientific and technical progress.

Spring is almost upon us. There is much to be done to ensure good preparation for sowing and to lay a good foundation for the future harvest. This will not be easy. Perhaps more than ever before the countryside is feeling the acute shortage of material and technical resources. The "Rostselmash" plant, visited by the seminar participants, is the largest supplier of equipment for the countryside. Especially grain combine harvesters. Today it is on the verge of stopping work. General Director Yu. Peskov spoke with bitterness about how the economy of the enterprise and the whole agro-industrial complex is being hit by violations of the ties formed between the plant and its partners in other union republics.

Economic difficulties, political instability, and increasing nationalist and extremist manifestations require from the CPSU and each Communist precise and clear positions and the ability to work in extreme conditions. Party committees were and remain centers for the consolidation of society and the ideological counterbalance to antisocialist forces.

Today, the seminar participants stated, the country's fate and future and the fate of the whole people are at stake. Destructive forces are pinning special hopes on a split in the rural environment and on hostility inflamed between workers and peasants. It is important to resolutely oppose such forces in the economic, political, and spiritual spheres. The working class and all the working people are clearly demanding discipline and order. And rural communists have no right to shirk the challenge of the times.

Military

Military, Media View Gulf War Tactics, Weapons

Officers Discuss War Lessons

LD0103174391 Moscow TASS in English 1711 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Isachenkov]

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—Soviet officers—from lieutenants to marshals—are discussing the results of the Persian Gulf war. Some admire the high efficiency of the allied multinational forces, others say that reports on their accomplishments are exaggerated. People adhereing to one or the other of these viewpoints can be found among Soviet parliament members.

Colonel Aleksandr Tsalko, who headed an Air Force training centre before he was elected a Soviet peoples' deputy, told TASS that the crushing defeat of the Iraqi Army made clear that the Soviet military doctrine and the entire model of military building were obsolete.

"Some military authorities in this country continue to believe that the outcome of a war is determined by a clash of huge ground troop masses," he said. "It is sheer madness. The war in the Gulf clearly showed that the Iraqi Army was simply strafed by airstrikes and troops had to keep their noses buried in the sand all along".

Tsalko disagreed with the analysts who said the war also demonstrated the total backwardness of the Soviet military hardware. "On many counts we are not so much behind," he said and stressed that for the Soviet Army the main lesson of the Gulf war was that huge amounts of armored vehicles, tanks and artillery pieces were absolutely useless." [quotation mark as received]

The colonel also refused to share the viewpoint voiced by some Soviet newspapers lately that the American military did more than the United Nations Security Council mandated and staged ruthless slaughter.

"Once a war has started, it should continue until all its objectives have been reached or the cause which sparked it—a political regime—eliminated. This is the only guarantee that everything will not recur again", he said.

Another colonel, Nikolay Petrushenko, a leader of the Soyuz (Union) deputy group, who was a political worker in the Army before his election to the parliament, said he had no doubt that the success of the multinational forces was evidently exaggerated by the military propaganda.

"I do not believe official reports on the coalition losses," he said, citing this joke: "Summing up the results of the Gulf war, Saddam Husayn asked his generals why they thought Iraq had lost the war. The airforce commander replied, 'Because we had no stealth bombers'. The air defence commander said, 'because we had no patriot missiles'. And the information minister said, 'If we had the mass media of the kind the U.S has, the world would never have learned about our defeat'.

"We shall discuss the results of the war, as well as its military and political consequences, when we get reliable information on losses sustained by both sides," Petrushenko said.

"Only a very naive person can believe that during the month and a half of preparations for the war, the U.S. lost 80 people, while more than a month of hostilities claimed a total of 70 men killed or wounded".

From the very beginning of the Gulf conflict, Petrushenko headed a pro-Iraqi group which pressed for Eduard Shevardnadze's resignation. Last Autumn, one of his pronouncements became a catch- phrase: "We, Army political workers, said only yesterday that Iraq was a friend of ours, what will you order us to say now?"

Parliamentary debates about the Gulf conflict revealed that Petrushenko had numerous supporters.

Military Reform Prospects Discussed

LD0303151291 Moscow TASS in English 1502 GMT 3 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Igor Agabekov]

[Text] Moscow March 3 TASS—The present situation in the Soviet Armed Forces and the KGB and Interior Ministry troops, their attitude towards the multi-party system and prospects for military reform were discussed at today's conference at the Moscow City Council.

According to speakers at the conference, the Persian Gulf war made clear that the Soviet military doctrine and principles of military building have considerable drawbacks and prevailing views on modern war processes and outcomes [have become] outdated. It also showed advantages of a highly-professional armed force over a mass army based on universal military service.

Representatives of different arms said proclaimed military reform is not actually taking place for lack of relevant legislation.

Participants in the conference, including Soviet and Russian people's deputies, members of the Democratic Russia Movement, servicemen and future conscripts appealed to the Soviet president and the USSR Supreme Soviet to take urgent measures to ensure unconditional and undeviating observance of the laws of the USSR, Russia and other republics by the Soviet Armed Forces, Interior Ministry troops and the KGB.

Western, Soviet Arms Compared

PM0103114191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Union Edition p 4

[Interview with Major General N. Kutsenko, first deputy chief of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff Operational Strategic Studies Center, by IZVESTIYA correspondent V. Litovkin; place and date not given: "Lessons of Combat Operations"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Litovkin] What aims do you think the two combatant sides are pursuing today?

[Kutsenko] I think that these aims stem from the combatants' long-term interests. In assuming the role of leader in settling the conflict the United States is, in my view, not only pursuing the aim of restoring Kuwait's territorial integrity and deposed government. I think that its global plans are considerably wider—above all to establish total control over a strategically important region of the world and its oil reserves, remove an unwelcome regime, and consolidate its military presence in the region on a permanent basis. That is why, in my view, the USSR President's proposals regarding stopping military operations and resolving the problem peacefully—for which real preconditions existed—were not accepted.

As for Iraq's aims, there is no point in mentioning them today.

[Litovkin] Iraq's weapons and combat hardware are mainly Soviet-produced and its officers studied at our academies. Many people, whether we like it or not, see the Persian Gulf conflict as a clash between U.S. and Soviet military science, between their weapons and ours. It is obvious which side has the advantage....

[Kutsenko] I have heard that opinion, but I cannot agree with it. Let us separate the wheat from the chaff. First, Iraq's army by no means has Soviet military hardware alone: It was armed by everyone—both East and West. Second, Iraq's officers were not trained in our country alone but also in the best military schools in the West: France, Britain, Italy.... To claim that they copied our tactics and operationals skill is, at best, ridiculous, and not only because our military advisers were not in Iraq and because Iraq had the very rich experience gleaned from its eight-year war with Iran, where its officers

perfected their own methods and means of waging armed combat. Let us recall the art of concealment, misinformation of the enemy, protection facilities for equipment and arms, and hardening of combat positions....

Third, not everything depends on the quality of the equipment—more depends on the professional training of the people operating and servicing it. In the Iraqi Army both left a great deal to be desired.

Last, we are bound to take into consideration the fact that Iraq's arsenal, including its Soviet-produced arsenal, was largely developed in the sixties and seventies and is one or two generations behind the corresponding arms used by the multinational forces. The U.S., British, and French troops' arsenal contains state-of-the-art equipment of the eighties and nineties.

It is quite obvious that the NATO leadership regarded the war against Iraq as a testing ground for state-of-the-art arms and combat hardware which either are or will in the near future be part of the arsenal: F-117A fighter-bombers developed using qualitatively new "Stealth" technology, the "Patriot" air defense missile complex with its ABM missiles, the E-3A aircraft with its radar system for ground target reconnaissance and target designation, integrated reconnaissance and strike systems, air- and sea-launched cruise missiles, laser-guided bombs, and new armored equipment.

At the same time, experience of using Western technology in the desert and the hot climate has not only shown its advantages but also revealed major shortcomings. For instance, the Abrams tanks' gas-turbine engines have quite frequently been disabled by sand and the "Apache," "Puma," and other helicopters have proved unreliable in sandstorms...

I want to point out that, according to Syrian Defense Minister Corps General M. Talas, Soviet T-62's and other tanks, Mi-8 helicopters and later models, and small arms—all in use with Syrian units in the conflict zone—have proved very reliable and effective under these conditions.

I think that the results of and the peculiarities involved in the use of specific weapons systems and combat hardware by the United States and its allies will be analyzed for a long time yet by representatives of their armed forces and arms manufacturers—with a view to further improving them. Our planners and customers requiring our arms systems and combat hardware have something to think about.

[Litovkin] Does our Army have the kind of weapons that are being used by the allies in the Persian Gulf?

[Kutsenko] It does, but not all of them.

[Litovkin] One last question, Nikolay Ivanovich. When can we expect hostilities to end?

[Kutsenko] It is hard to answer that question unequivocally. As you may realize, neither the U.S. nor the Iraqi command has let us into its plans for fighting the war. The whole course of events, however, illustrates that UN Security Council Resolution 678 should be implemented within the near future.

There is a danger that the U.S. could exceed its authority and transfer combat operations to Iraqi territory; then the war could assume a completely different character. Time will tell how everything goes.

'Useful Lessons' To Be Drawn

LD0103201291 Moscow TASS in English 1936 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Moscow March 1 TASS—The swift developments in the Gulf were closely followed by the Soviet Defense Ministry, Nikolay Kutsenko, chief of the Operational Strategic Research Centre of the Soviet Armed Forces General Staff, told TASS today. Serious conclusions will be drawn from this armed conflict. Useful lessons on all the spectrum of contemporary military structures will be drawn, Kutsenko said.

The Desert Storm operation conducted by the multinational forces under the U.S. guidance was not very novel in the operational tactical aspect, Kutsenko said. Such warfare methods as large-scale use of air force, cruise missiles and other high-precision weapons, as well as of radio electronic disturbances and prolonged operations to disable the enemy's command structure and undermine its military and economic potentials have already been employed in wars and conflicts involving the air force of the United States, Israel and Great Britain, Kutsenko said.

As regards actions of the Iraqi Army, its imaginative use of operational camouflage of troops is of certain interest militarily. [passage omitted]

A workshop to analyse the Gulf events is to be held at the Defense Ministry soon. It will analyse in detail all the aspects of the armed conflict, Kutsenko said.

Army Spending Questioned

LD0103200491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1530 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Western military analysts have began studying the 42-day war against Iraq. The personal profile of Saddam Husayn has already been completed. It goes like this: He is neither a strategist nor a tactician, neither a general nor a soldier; but in everything else—a great military commander.

Did our military men not see with whom they did business? The London Institute of Strategic Studies has concluded that Iraq adopted the Soviet military doctrine, but the strategy and the tactics of the Soviet Army are not adequate in modern warfare.

According to U.S. specialists, the Soviet T-72 tanks, with which the Iraqi Army is equipped, always failed in combat with the U.S. M-1 Abrams. Interesting. How

many T-72 tanks are still in the Soviet Army? If there are a lot, then the question arises: Are the thousands of millions of rubles allocated to the defense of our country being spent wisely? [passage omitted]

Kulikov Defends Soviet Weaponry

AU0103205091 Paris AFP in English 1952 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, March 1 (AFP)—Marshal Viktor Kulikov, the former commander in chief of Warsaw Pact forces, said on Friday that the "human factor" was largely responsible for the Iraqi defeat in the Gulf war, in an interview with the news agency INTERFAX.

He said that the Soviet material sold to Iraq was not technically inferior to analogous items in Western arsenals, claiming that the "human factor" was always the decisive element in the success or failure of any weapon system.

Marshal Kulikov said that although the Iraqis had been trained by Soviet military advisors, "one does not always succeed in injecting one's knowledge into someone else's head."

However, like Defense Minister Marshal Dmitriy Yazov the previous day, Marshal Kulikov acknowledged that the Iraqi air defense system, composed essentially of Soviet material, had not functioned.

"The military operations between the coalition forces and Iraq have modified the idea which we had about the nature of modern military operations," said Marshal Kulikov, who is currently responsible for veterans' affairs at the Defense Ministry.

"A deeper analysis is necessary, but one point is already clear; the Soviet Armed Forces will have to take a closer look at the quality of their weapons, their equipment and their strategy," he indicated.

Yazov, Others Sign Air Defense Chief's Obituary

PM2802130391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Feb 91 First Edition p 4

[Obituary of Colonel General of Aviation, Retired, B.V. Bochkov]

[Excerpts] Colonel General of Aviation, Retired, Boris Viktorovich Bochkov, an active participant in the Great Patriotic War, died suddenly at the age of 66. [passage omitted]

In the postwar period, B.V. Bochkov graduated from the Air Force Academy and the USSR Armed Forces General Staff Military Academy. He was commander of an aviation regiment, a division, a corps, and an independent air defense army. He was commander of the Moscow Air Defense District and deputy commander in chief of the Air Defense Forces. [passage omitted]

[Signed] D.T. Yazov, M.A. Moiseyev, P.G. Lushev, K.A. Kochetov, N.I. Shlyaga, Yu.P. Maksimov, V.I. Varennikov, I.M. Tretyak, Ye.I. Shaposhnikov, V.N. Chernavin, V.M. Shuralev, V.M. Arkhipov, V.P. Mironov, V.A. Achalov, N.V. Chekov, V.L. Govorov, V.F. Yermakov, Yu.A. Yashin, A.N. Soshnikov, N.M. Boyko, V.V. Litvinov, I.M. Maltsev, V.G. Tsarkov, N.I. Chukarin, V.M. Kraskovskiy, R.S. Akchurin, O.V. Anisimov, A.A. Voblikov, G.K. Dubrov, V.A. Prudnikov, A.Ya. Kostin, A.I. Koldunov, S.A. Bobylev.

Baltic Republics

Nearly 78 Percent Vote for Estonian Independence

LD0403154891 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1500 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Summary] The republican election committee announced the 3 March referendum results through the Estonian Telegraph Agency. Of all eligible voters, 82.86 percent turned out. Of the voters, 77.83 percent voted for an independent Estonia, 21.43 percent voted against, and 0.74 percent of the voting slips were invalid.

Republic of Estonia Foreign Minister Lennart Meri noted in a news conference today that according to evaluations by foreign observers the referendum met international requirements. Meri emphasized that the referendum was completely unavoidable for Estonia because it enabled the Estonians to take the voice of a small nation into the world and to demonstrate their political will. He hoped the referendum results would provide courage and serve as an example to all democratic forces that, in the past two or three months, have had to beat a temporary retreat in the Soviet Union.

Almost 84 Percent Participate

LD0403072491 Moscow TASS in English 0703 GMT 4 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Albert Maloveryan]

[Text] Tallinn March 4 TASS—Some 79 per cent of permanent residents of Estonia on Sunday voted for restoring the state independence of the Estonian Republic.

Some 83.6 per cent of the republic's electorate, numbering 1.1 million people, took part in the republican poll on Sunday.

The results of the poll will have no legal power, but the Estonian parliament will rely upon them as the will of the Estonian people, Estonian President Arnold Ruutel told a news conference here.

An average of 90 per cent of people in rural areas of the republic, where the indigenous population makes up the majority, took part in the poll. Some 93 per cent of them said "yes" to independence.

A total of 25.5 per cent supported the restoration of an independent Estonian state in Narva and 40.5 per cent in Sillamaye in the republic's northeast, where the Russian-speaking population lives.

In a parallel poll in these predominantly Russian-populated industrial areas, most people favoured Estonia remaining in the Soviet Union.

Ruutel Comments on Results

LD0403110191

[Editorial Report] Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian at 0700 GMT on 4 March carries a seven-minute report on the referendum-related news conference in Tallinn which began at 0315 local time. Erik Truuvali, chairman of the republican elections committee, announced the preliminary referendum results as follows: Voting turnout was 82.86 percent; 77.88 percent voted for an independent Estonia. Truuvali says: "I should now say something on behalf of the republican elections committee. I will say the following: Dear Estonian people! We embrace you all. Thank you."

Arnold Ruutel, chairman of the Supreme Soviet, then makes a speech. He says: "I think we all are pleased to acknowledge that the referendum which caused so much debate before we started to organize it has been carried out in an organized manner and well, as you have heard, the results are fairly good. One could even say that they are good beyond expectation." He adds: "It is also a pleasure to realize that representatives of different ethnic groups, people of different nationalities, took quite an active part in the voting, in the referendum." Even though there are no official final results, he asks what conclusions should be drawn: "As it was said before the referendum—and I would like to emphasize it now—the referendum does not constitute any legal consequences. It will serve as a foundation to our subsequent legislative activity. We evidently need to speed up drafting a fundamental law in order to put it out for a public debate, and to adopt it, and then, founded already on our fundamental law, we can start to improve our legal basis." Ruutel mentions previous assertions by various political figures who claimed to have popular support, and adds: "These referendum results, however, have now provided a completely clear answer and I think we can say that in Estonia the political line pursued by the republican Supreme Soviet and the government corresponds and has been corresponding to the will of the people."

Communists Reportedly Vote

LD0303191591 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1506 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Interview with Tallinn correspondent Andrey Trapeznikov by unidentified announcer; from the "Panorama" program—live]

[Text] [Announcer] What results do you have, if any, for this poll?

[Trapeznikov] Yes, there are results, although the voting will continue for three more hours. One can say that the referendum—I emphasize that it is not a poll but a referendum—has taken place. By 1300 Moscow time, more than 51 percent of the population of Estonia who have a right to vote made their choice. I would like to draw your attention to this formula, to who has a right to

vote. According to the resolution on holding the referendum, the servicemen of the Soviet Army, as well as those serving in the railway troops, border guard units, and internal troops, are deprived of the right to answer the question: Do you favor the restoration of state sovereignty and independence of the Estonian republic? The same is true of people with temporary residence permits. I was told at the referendum press center that there are about 150,000 such people, more than 10 percent of the population. Meanwhile, citizens held in custody or under arrest have been allowed to vote.

This morning, I visited a number of polling stations in Tallinn and I would like to note the good organization and order of the voting. This was confirmed by the observers representing various public and political organizations, including those from abroad, who enjoy free access to all the polling stations. Aleksey (Pogorelyy), an observer from Moscow City Soviet whom I met at polling station no. 2 in (Lautyye) Street, even pointed out that the voting is going in a more organized way than, for example, during the elections of the soviets on the territory of Russia. The representatives of the Communist Party of Estonia on the Platform of the CPSU are not receiving any reprimands either. I heard this through the secretary of the party committee of the Dvigatel [engine] works, which is under Union subordination, the biggest union-subordinate works in Estonia, Yevgeniy (Yevlov). This happened at polling station no. 112.

The Communists, he said, have decided to participate in the referendum, although there were suggestions at the beginning that this event should be boycotted. But, learning from their bitter experience, specifically from that of the boycott of the town Soviet elections, which, as a result, was formed without their participation, the Communist Party members will come to the polling stations today. The secretary of the party committee also said that the Communist Party and a number of other public-political organizations would try to participate in the all-Union referendum as well, which will take place 17 March. But, for this they need support, particularly material and technical support, from the All-Union Central Electoral Commission because, as you know, the Estonian leadership has announced that they are not going to make any preparations for the all-union referendum. However, they are not going to hinder it.

Let us return to today's referendum, in the republic. The first half of the day has shown that the population in the country has been most active at voting. For example, by 1300 Moscow time more than 62 percent of this population voted. In the towns, the percentage is lower, just 42.6 percent. But, it is expected that, toward the evening, many town dwellers will return home and also vote. It is not known yet how the votes have been divided. I would like to point out that the republican electoral commission is working openly. A total of 73 Estonian journalists have already registered at the press center, as well as 94 foreign ones. I fell in the latter category. There are regular press briefings, and everybody is, of course, awaiting the final news conference around 0200 Moscow time, when the final results of the referendum will be announced by Arnold Ruutel, chairman of the republic's parliament. We have to wait just a few more hours.

[Announcer] I suppose we will be waiting for a report from you in tomorrow morning's "Panorama".

[Trapeznikov] Yes, surely.

Ruutel on Eve of Referendum

LD0203211991 Moscow TASS in English 2046 GMT 2 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Yuriy Novak]

[Text] Vienna March 2 TASS—Two weeks ago, on February 9, a public opinion poll was taken in Lithuania. The polled were asked: "Do you want the Lithuanian state to be an independent democratic republic?" In two weeks, on March 17, an all-Union referendum will be held on the problem of the preservation of the Soviet Union. On March 3 a referendum similar to the one held in Lithuania will be held in Estonia and Latvia.

The DIE PRESSE newspaper published today an interview with Estonian President Arnold Ruutel, given by him in Copenhagen to its correspondent. The interview is entitled "Answer to Moscow and Message to Whole World."

Responding to the question, what the Sunday referendum will be like—a strength test for the unity of the Estonian nation or a demonstration for Moscow and the West, Ruutel said that the referendum would not have a direct legal impact on the taking of a final decision, but its results would become a basis for further actions of the parliament.

We should know the feelings and the will of the people on this crucial problem—whether or not Estonia will be integrated into the Soviet Union. The results of the public opinion poll will also become a clear answer to Moscow, the president pointed out. We proclaimed a transitional period, announced that the Soviet Constitution was not valid on Estonian territory, and now the parliament elected by the Estonian people should be given the foundation for continuing its work.

The restoration of independence of the Republic of Estonia is the most important problem to us, the president stressed. This is why we must know the opinion of the majority of the population. We are going to hold this referendum for one more reason: The problem of the Baltic region has remained unresolved for 50 years. It was not discussed on the international level. The referendum should help us in this respect.

The president believes that the majority of ethnic Estonians will take part in the referendum and 96 per cent of them will support the idea of an independent republic. The Russian-speaking population of the republic feels more and more inclined to support the idea of Estonia's independence. According to the results of a public

opinion poll held late in February, more than 50 per cent of Russians living in the republic support the idea of creating independent Estonia, the president stressed.

According to Ruutel, positive results of the referendum will help overcome scepticism of some Western countries concerning Estonia's desire to become an independet state. It would be illogical not to recognise the desire of the whole nation to become an independent state, the president believes.

Ruutel believes that the role of Russians in future independent Estonia is one of the most serious problems. Of course, many Russian-speaking people would like to live in Estonia. But many of those who are employed in the military-industrial complex and special services will hardly express the intention to live in independent Estonia, the president stressed.

Democratic Russia Supports Referendum

LD0103230991 Tallin Domestic Service in Estonian 1300 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] One of the most popular democratic movements in the USSR—Democratic Russia—has adopted a message to compatriots living in Estonia. It appeals for their particpation in the referendum, and for giving one's firm yes. Democratic Russia thinks that a sovereign, democratic Estonia might and should become home for all those who are living on its territory.

The treaty between Estonia and the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] which was signed recently creates a legal foundation for the protection of the rights of our compatriots by the Russian government. The Democratic Russia movement expresses its pleasure that the referendum allows the particpation of everybody who lives permanently on Estonian territory. We hope that everybody who so wishes may become a citizen of a sovereign Estonia, according to the Estonia-RSFSR treaty, stresses the Democratic Russia movement.

Estonian Militia Replaced by Police Force

LD0303233191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1900 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] Our special correspondent Andrey Trapeznikov has reported from Tallinn. In accordance with a decision of the Estonian Supreme Soviet, the militia has been abolished in the republic from 1 March onward. It will now be replaced by a police force.

As the chief director of the police department reported, police cadres are now being brought up to strength. Prefects of the republic's nineteen okrugs have already been appointed. However, in his words, nothing can be changed in one day. The creation of a real police force will require much time.

Nordic Council Adopts Baltic Cooperation Program

LD0303085991 Vilnius International Service in Lithuanian 0100 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] The Nordic Council has adopted a program of cooperation with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. It provides for the expansion of ties with the Baltic states and support for their economy, culture, and democratic development.

The program was adopted in Copenhagen at the conclusion of the Nordic Council session, which was attended by Danish, Icelandic, Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, and also, Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian parliamentary delegations.

Ruutel on Nordic Ties

LD2802215391 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1800 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Text] Leaders of the Baltic countries held a news conference today at the Nordic Council session in Copenhagen. Over to Ita Serman and Arnold Ruutel.

[Begin recording] [Serman] A large number of journalists from the world's leading information agencies gathered in the Danish parliament building. If at first there was perhaps a need to explain our situation and our ambitions a bit, then later, Mr. Ruutel, the discussion switched specifically to relations between us and the Nordic countries. What do we expect and hope from them?

[Ruutel] Undoubtedly we expect, well, I would say, quite a lot, because the Nordic countries have so far expressed considerable support for us in resolving our problems and undoubtedly they will continue to do so in the future. Yesterday I met all prime ministers of the Nordic Council member countries, and the day before I met the Danish prime minister, so that I have had an opportunity to exchange ideas with all the Nordic prime ministers, without exception, and with some of the foreign ministers.

The main subject of our conversations was, first, to inform each other of the situation—we have agreed with all the countries about our next contacts and exchanges of ideas in order to further develop relations between Estonia and any specific country, proceeding from the political and legal aspect.

[Serman] In fact, yet another—a smaller—news conference followed today's news conference: A conversation with representatives of Benelux countries, on the understanding that small countries understand each other better.

[Ruutel] Yes, I thought some time ago that it is necessary to create contacts with Benelux countries, and I proposed that we should meet, together with the Latvian and Lithuanian leaders. Also, to set up within the framework of the Baltic Council—the Baltic States' Council—

contacts with Benelux countries. Our meeting was very friendly and they showed much interest in this.

I see it mainly this way: Half a year or a year ago, when we were debating who could be delivering freedom to Estonia, our politicians relied very much on the Euro-parliament and on the United States. Undoubtedly, both directions were correct in principle, but both these bodies deal with global politics, and the Baltics have not managed to fit into global politics within the past 50 years. Now we have reached the stage when a Nordic parliamentary delgation has visited the Baltic States' Council and now we are here, at the annual session of the Nordic Council. I would add another aspect that guests are never given the floor at the Nordic Council but now, as an exception, we have indeed been given the floor. [end recording]

Estonian Representative Observes Union Talks

LD0103094491 Moscow TASS in English 0907 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Sergey Zharkov]

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—Plenipotentiary representatives of Union and autonomous republics, who are discussing the draft Union treaty, decided to grant an observer status to Margarita Chernogorova from Estonia. She arrived in the Morozovka Holiday Hotel, where work on the draft is afoot, on Thursday.

Chernogorova told TASS that she did not represent her republic officially. She was delegated to Moscow by the Inter-regional Council of People's Deputies and Delegates of the Estonian Working People. This organisation works for the socialist choice, for preserving a single union and upholds the rights of the republic's Russian-speaking population.

Chernogorova is a consultant on legal issues at the inter-regional council. She is fifty.

Estonian Legislature Drops People's Front Drafts

PM0103144391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 1 Mar 91 First Edition p 4

[TASS report: "Legislature 'Cleans' Agenda"]

[Text] Tallinn, 28 Feb—In a secret vote a majority of Estonian Supreme Soviet deputies excluded from the agenda the draft laws "On the Election of the State Assembly of the Estonian Republic," "On the Head of Government and the Board [pravleniye] of the Estonian Republic Supreme Soviet in the Transitional Period," and "On the Estonian Republic Supreme Soviet."

These draft laws were submitted for expert legal examination by a group of specialists attached to the republic's Supreme Soviet Presidium and were qualified as reflecting the interests of certain political forces, but they were flawed from the viewpoint of the state organization.

The decision of the majority of deputies not to discuss these draft laws is seen as an appreciable blow to the plans of the Estonian People's Front bloc, which initiated the draft laws. A section of the body of deputies sees behind this the prevention of a People's Front state coup, which would have been possible after these drafts acquired the force of law. The assumption is not without foundation, since the transformation of the Supreme Soviet chairman into a "head of state," and the Presidium into a board, would have allowed the authors of these changes to begin reshuffling personnel in the Supreme Soviet leadership and thus to go as far as disbanding the present supreme legislative body and holding elections for a new body on the basis of the law on the state assembly.

Front Suffers 'Major Defeat'

LD2802220991 Moscow Radio Rossii Netork in Russian 1100 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] The People's Front of Estonia bloc [Narodniy Front Estonii] has suffered its first major defeat in the republic's legislature. By secret ballot the deputies removed three important draft laws from the agenda: on the Estonian Republic's Supreme Soviet; on the head of state and the running of the Estonian Republic's Supreme Soviet during the transitional period; and on elections to the Estonian National Assembly. The legislature's refusal to discuss these draft laws is seen by many as being a way of averting a People's Front coup in Estonia.

Premier Denies 'Defeat'

LD0103152191 Moscow TASS in English 1311 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Albert Maloveryan]

[Text] Tallinn March 1 TASS—The fact that the Estonian parliament on Wednesday decided not to discuss three bills on the republic's governing bodies cannot be considered the Popular Front's defeat, Estonian Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar told a news conference on Thursday.

The prime minister denied reports by the republican press that the Popular Front, a public and political movement favouring Estonia's secession from the Soviet Union, is extremely interested in passing the bills. Savisaar is also an Estonian Popular Front leader.

The adoption of the bills would lead to serious changes in the republican leadership and strengthen Savisaar's position, experts believe.

During the news conference, Savisaar favoured restoring "constitutional bodies of power" ousted in 1940, and electing a state Duma (parliament).

The proposal to withdraw the bills was made by the expert commission for public and international law at the parliament presidium. The commission decided that

the bills reflected the position of a separate political group concerning the mechanism of state power, and were contradictory from the legal point of view.

Latvian Majority Vote for Independence 3 Mar

85 Percent Vote Yes

LD0403022491

[Editorial Report] Riga Domestic Service in Latvian at 0000 GMT on 4 March reports that at a news conference held at the Supreme Council of Latvia, the overall results of the poll on independence were announced: 93.1 percent of eligible voters participated, of whom 85.7 percent voted for independence, 13.3 percent against, and 1 percent invalid.

At 2210 GMT, the same service notes the results in the Vidzeme Rayon of Riga, which is the electorate of Sergejs Dimanis, leader of the Equal Rights faction in the Supreme Council: 81.2 percent of eligible voters voted, of whom 56.6 percent voted for independence, 41 percent against, and 2.4 percent invalid. In Aizpute, more than 95 percent of participants in the poll voted; 98.6 percent voted for independence.

A sensational result in the poll occurred in the rural district of Otanki: In the poll, 100 percent of registered voters voted, and 100 percent of Otanki residents voted for independence. That exceeds the all-time record of the stagnation era, the radio reports.

Moscow Says 74 Percent Vote Yes

LD0403123891 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 4 Mar 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] An hour ago we received more precise preliminary data on the results of the poll in Latvia: 73.61 percent voted in favor of the republic's independence; 24.78 percent against; and 1.5 percent of the ballot papers were deemed invalid.

Preliminary Results by Rayon Given

LD0303234491

[Editorial Report] Riga Domestic Service in Latvian at 2130 GMT on 3 March carries live a 23-minute news conference on the Latvian independence referendum by Central Polling Commission Chairman Gunars Blums and other referendum officials with unidentified reporters in Riga.

The unidentified announcer begins by reviewing the previous three weeks of preparations for the poll, announcing that the vote counting has ended in some polling stations, and introduces those speaking at the news conference.

During the news conference, Blums reports that the final results of the poll will be available around 0000 GMT and that the electoral commission will meet at 2300 GMT. He then announces that more than 85 percent of the eligible Latvian population voted and provides the following voter percentages, by rayon:

Talsi: 97.3 percent, of whom 98.2 percent voted for independence, 1.66 percent against, 0.1 percent invalid;

Balvi 96.5 percent, of whom 95.2 for, 4.4 percent against, 0.4 percent invalid;

Jelgava 92.1 percent, of whom 82.7 percent for, 16.3 percent against, 1 percent invalid;

Aizkraukle 94.4 percent, of whom 90.7 percent for, 8.6 percent against, 0.7 percent invalid;

Bauska 93.97 percent, of whom 90.9 percent for, 8.4 percent against, 0.7 percent invalid;

Ventspils 97.1 percent, of whom 94.6 percent for, 5.1 percent against, 0.29 percent invalid;

Ogre 93.56 percent, of whom 89.3 percent for, 9.9 percent against, 0.7 percent invalid;

Riga Central rayon 85 percent, of whom 75 percent approximately for, 25 percent approximately against, with results still coming in;

Gulbene 94.8 percent, of whom 90.1 percent for, 8.5 percent against, 0.6 percent invalid;

and Limbazi 97.7 percent, of whom 96.5 percent for, 3.2 percent against, 0.3 percent invalid.

The following information is also provided on Estonian referendum voting:

(?Rapla) 93.56 percent, of whom 97.62 percent for;

West Virumaa 85.95 percent, of whom 91.52 percent for;

Hiiumaa 92.68 percent, of whom 98.93 percent for;

Silamae 27.38 percent, of whom 40.45 percent for.

At 2153 GMT, the news conference ends with the announcement that more results will become available at 0000 GMT.

Additional Rayon Results

LD0303235291

[Editorial Report] Riga Domestic Service in Latvian at 2206 GMT on 3 March reports the following figures on the Latvian independence referendum, by rayon:

Daugavpils 82.3 percent voted, of whom 65.1 percent for, 32.3 percent against, 2.6 percent invalid;

Rezekne 90.3 percent voted, of whom 65.6 percent for, 32.8 percent against, 1.7 percent invalid;

Daugavpils city 63.3 percent voted, of whom 51.3 percent for, 39.8 percent against, 8.85 percent invalid;

Aluksne 96.3 percent voted, 90 percent for, 9.1 percent against, 0.9 percent invalid;

and Dobele 94 percent voted, of whom 84.8 percent for, 13.9 percent against, 1.3 percent invalid.

The report ends without mention of further announcements on results.

Gorbunovs Comments on Results

LD0403161491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1210 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Excerpts] We now have our correspondent Valentina Bochkova from Riga on the line. Valentina, we are ready to hear the results of your poll—the pan-Latvian poll on the destiny of the republic, so to speak.

[Bochkova] [passage omitted] Here are the results: 87.5 percent of the population of the republic took part in the referendum. I would like to say that the final results are now being drawn up, at this minute. According to the preliminary results, however, 73.6 percent have answered the question in the affirmative. So the percentage is very high. [passage omitted] Just now a news conference for foreign journalists given by Anatoliy Gorbunovs, chairman of the Latvian Supreme Soviet, and Gunnars Blums, chairman of the Central Commission for the Population Poll, has finished. Here is a question by a representative of Danish television, and its answer:

[Begin recording] [Journalist] Mr. Gorbunovs, could you clarify what fraction of the Russian—the Russian-speaking—population voted for independence? Could it be that the people who did not take part in the referendum are of the Russian-speaking population? Could you comment on this? Who, in your opinion, did not take part in the referendum?

[Gorbunovs] It is rather difficult to answer your question because we did not organize the voting according to nationality. We did not register voters according to their nationality. Of course, one can imagine that the Russian-speaking population, as you put it, was less active. There could be various combinations, but generally, there was relatively a very high percentage of participation in the referendum. At least, I can draw one conclusion for myself—and I think the chairman can also formulate his opinion. My conclusion is that the Russian-speaking population did not boycott the poll. Of course, you can hazard another guess: that among the Russian population a larger proportion voted against.

[Blums] I only wanted to add this: in all the towns under the republic's subordination, the Latvian population forms a minority. But, here are the results: The participation in the poll in the towns under the republic's subordination is 78.77 percent; 62.1 percent voted in favor. This just shows objectively that the Russian-speaking population, as we are now accustomed to calling it, has taken part in the voting and given a positive response. [end recording]

[Announcer] Thank you, Valentina. Everything is clear to me and to our listeners too, I think. The division of forces, so to speak.

[Bochkova] You know, I am sorry, I would like just two more words as a conclusion. Anatoliy Valerianovich Gorbunovs said at today's news conference for foreign journalists that Latvia is confirming once again its desire to continue its talks with the USSR with the purpose that Latvia should be recognized de facto. And he hopes very strongly that both the president and the USSR Supreme Soviet can work out a new Baltic concept by April. [passage omitted]

Deputy Thanks Voters for Support

LD0403024291 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 0000 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Speech by Andrejs Krastins, deputy chairman of the Latvian Supreme Soviet, following the reading of the individual results from rayons and towns by Gunars Blums]

[Excerpt] Ladies and gentlemen: I would like to share the gratitude that was expressed to you by Mr. Blums. Thank you for your endurance. I must say that rounding up the results of the vote, we can clearly see that there is not a single region or administrative district in Latvia where people have not voted in favor of a democratic and independent Latvia. This result has deprived the opposition of any counterargument. I would like especially to stress the fact that even in those regions where the demographic situation is unfavorable, where only 12 percent are indigenous population—such regions as Daugavpils and Daugavpils City—even there, more than 51 percent have voted in support. Irrespective of the fact that enemies and opponents of the independence cause, especially the Communist Party, have been asking to invalidate their ballots, even there the results are in favor of independence and democracy.

Permit me to conclude by saying that the freely expressed will of the Latvian nation has overcome and has won a victory over the ideas expressed by the totalitarian regimes. This means only one thing; the Latvian nation has firmly expressed the wish to be free, and nobody can detain it on its way to this freedom. We thank all of you who have helped to carry this news and bring it to the attention of the world.

I would like to say the most important thing: Today, on this festive occasion, all those who live in Latvia and who are non-Latvians have proved that they are together with the Latvian nation and they are supporting the cause of independence. Thank you. [passage omitted]

Latvians Call For 'Deportation' of Non-Letts

LD0103230291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] An item from Riga. It says that in the view of radicals in an association of the Latvian Popular Front,

some 900,000 immigrant aliens [chuzhestrantsev]—as they are called in a document—residing in Latvia are a destructive force undermining the traditions and customs of the people, and also promoting the ethnic extinction of the Letts. Moreover, the radicals regard as alien all the republic's non-Lettish inhabitants.

A placard urges that demographic issues should be immediately tackled in organizing all kinds of assistance for the voluntary repatriation of aliens from Latvia. To this end the radical association has set up a so-called assistance fund for repatriates. The assistance is said, in a commentary printed in the newspaper SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA, to consist of 400 rubles. If it is supposed that all aliens in Latvia apply for it, they will receive 700,000 rubles less than has been allocated for the holding of the forthcoming republican poll.

In this connection the newspaper SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA regards such invitations to deportation as the actions of radicals from the Latvian Popular Front, which qualify on all counts for prosecution under the article of the criminal code on the violation of national and racial equality of rights.

Latvia's Ivans Urges 'Offensive' Against Moscow

LD0203182191 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 1400 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Remarks by Dainis Ivans, first deputy chairman of the Latvian Supreme Council, in an interview with correspondent Anta Busa, place and date not given—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Ivans] I have been requested by my colleagues to say a few words on the poll, and at the same time, I also want to say that we cannot, of course, expect that this poll will solve all our problems. I have said before that freedom is not being won either in polls or beautiful talk or in dialogue. Freedom is a struggle; it must be won by fighting for it. In this instance the poll is simply one step toward that freedom. [passage omitted]

Unfortunately, those colleagues of mine who have been out to the rural areas of Latvia and have been talking to people felt rather dangerous symptoms—indeed a little more dangerous than pneumonia—symptoms of a certain apathy in the people a certain disbelief. For example: What is the point of us voting here—the Supreme Council and the government have not, after all, done anything big. What have you altered? The situation is worse than it was in the 1970's. Get at least that, and then let us talk further about some kind of independence.

Here it should be understood that the basic cause of all our misfortunes—including those misfortunes which have lowered our standard of living—is the regime that has existed here, and that empire in which we have lived until now. In not finding this basic cause, in failing to find a solution and so avert it, we would not be able speak of any improvement of life. What is completely clear is that as privatization goes, so owes the improvement of economic life and the solution to social questions and questions of democratization in Latvia. We will only solve these when we are independent and free.

Yes, there is a certain impasse, in that Moscow does not wish to talk with us; it does not hear. In the Western countries this process of recognition has already begun. Moreover, it has begun with great scope and momentum. I am able to say that Latvia in principle is already in the process of being recognized as a state, and precisely because of that we must do a very great deal of work. We have hopes that our question will be raised at an international level. [passage omitted] Nevertheless, in showing again in the polls that the greater majority of the inhabitants of Latvia are for independence, we will prove that there is not a single argument that could prove that there is some kind of huge discord here, that there will be [word indistinct] here, that there will be civil war here in the event independence is established in Latvia.

Moreover, these Western countries that are at present ready to help us, and want to tackle our questions on an international level, have also to reply to Gorbachev, because the argument of Gorbachev has all the time been yes, but they are afraid here of any kind of poll, as it is a small handful of political intriguers who have seized power. [passage omitted]

One more thing. It must also be remembered that in the poll you are not, after all, voting for the parliament, or for the government whose policy could at times be not to your liking. Quite logically, it may have made mistakes, as we, too, are human beings, just as you are. We have, after all, come from among you. But in a normal, independent, democratic country the problem is neither the parliament nor the government. If it is not capable of fulfilling its functions, it can leave. [passage omitted]

So the first argument at the moment, for why we must all attend, is that we all should vote for Latvia, and should untie our hands. When our hands are untied, we will be able, of course, to demand the maximum of both the government and of ourselves, the deputies. Surely this very voting is also a small step forward to the elections to the Seima of the Republic of Latvia—because, well, the Seima will, evidently, be the lawful organ of power. Surely during that election to the Seima we will be really able to say that we are a sovereign, independent country, and that we are really able ourselves to decide our destiny.

And so the very last of the arguments, about which we have perhaps not spoken sufficiently, but which is a rather essential one—the poll that is being organized by Gorbachev. But Gorbachev is organizing an absurd poll. He is organizing a poll in order to preserve something which is in the past—which, as it were, would be renewed. At least I am not able to imagine a more absurd poll. Likewise, the simulation of a poll is simply some kind of shamelessness; it is, well, like the ravings of an imperial disease to organize this poll. Let us take into

consideration that this poll of Gorbachev's is, after all, a defensive poll. It is an endeavor to save what is old, what has been.

Our poll is a poll of attack—because at this moment we are attacking; we want to prove that our force is a new one. We want to create something new. [passage omitted] This time we somehow came to a stop. I hope that the poll will represent a breaking out. [passage omitted] An offensive in relations with Moscow must begin—because, after all, the last argument of Gorbachev that the Supreme Council is a small handful of political intriguers who have seized power and who make fools of the darling people of Latvia. In the end this argument, too, will no longer make any sense. [passage omitted]

Let us assume the event, although I do not believe that a minority of the inhabitants of Latvia would vote for independence. I think that this could really exacerbate our relations exceedingly. [passage omitted] But there is yet this middle version: if we won with a very small majority in this poll, let us say with 51 percent or 54 percent. First, this is quite sufficient. [passage omitted] There is one more argument. I think that we should not shy away from it—we should not forget that after all, during these years the demographic balance has been changed by violent force in Latvia. If even with such a demographic composition we are able to vote by a majority for an independent Latvia, there can be no kind of argument preventing us from gaining this democratic Latvia.

This must be told abroad—and I think that in the majority of the countries of the world this is very well understood, as there is, after all, no precedent to the situation in Latvia: that such a huge, proportionally large part of the population has been deported to Siberia, and that in their place people have been brought in from the east, who themselves are not, however, to blame that they have been brought here. This is the most total use of violence; essentially, this is genocide against the people. If in this situation, even in this critical situation, we were to surrender, then we would not be able to regard ourselves as a people or as human beings, as human beings with self-respect. [passage omitted]

Explosion Reported in Vilnius; No Casualties

LD0303141691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1338 GMT 3 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Serafim Bykhun]

[Text] Vilnius, 3 March (TASS)—Last night, the inhabitants of houses situated near the buildings of the Oktyabrskiy and Sovetskiy Rayon committees of the Vilnius Communist Party of Lithuania were awakened by an explosion and the ringing sound of broken windows.

"The explosion was carried out by persons unknown at 0330 approximately two meters from the buildings of the rayon committees," Colonel Grigoriy Belous, military commandant of the Vilnius garrison, told the TASS correspondent. "The force of the homemade explosive device can be judged from the fact that it was not just the buildings of the rayons committees which were damaged by the explosion—so also were five houses and one administrative building. Fortunately, there were no casualties. The procuracy and militia bodies are now carrying out an investigation into the explosion."

The colonel expressed the opinion that this criminal act was intended to intimidate not only communists, but also all those citizens who intend turning up at the voting urns on 17 March to cast their votes for the preservation of a renovated union as a federation of equal sovereign Soviet socialist republics.

"There is no doubt," stressed the colonel, "that the extremist forces are preparing to disrupt the holding of the referendum in the republic. According to the information we possess, armed vigilantes [boyeviki] from Kaunas, Panevezys, Siauliai, and other towns and rayons of Lithuania are converging on Vilnius. It is so far difficult to say what tasks they will fulfill here. But it is quite clear they are coming here with malevolent intentions."

Vagnorius Issues Statement on Enterprises

LD0103213591 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] We will begin the bulletin with a declaration by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania:

Various USSR ministries, departments, and organizations have recently again increased illegal activity forcing [word indistinct] the administrators of Union enterprises to sign agreements on terms of employment, based upon USSR laws.

The government of the Republic of Lithuania reiterates its assertion once again that all state institutions, enterprises, and organizations located on Lithuania's territory are under the jurisdiction of the Lithuanian Republic, while their state administration is the responsibility of Government of the Republic of Lithuania.

Only in exceptional cases may the [word indistinct] be determined through negotiations with the USSR. Only the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and its authorized ministry or people's administrative organs, guided by the enterprise law of the Lithuanian Republic and other laws, have the power to appoint or dismiss the heads of state institutions, enterprises, or organizations.

Individuals who violate the established order of administrative organs will be held responsible according to the laws of the Lithuanian Republic.

The Government of the Republic of Lithuania protects and will continue to protect its enterprises, their heads, and their workers from the willfulness of the USSR ministries and departments.

[Signed] Gediminas Vagnorius, prime minister of the Republic of Lithuania.

Lithuania Authorizes Resistance to 'Occupation'

LD0103181391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1651 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 1 Mar (TASS)—The Lithuanian legislature has introduced an addendum to an article in the republic's provisional basic law to the effect that its citizens "have the right to resist anyone who may attempt to use force to encroach on the sovereignty and integrity of the Lithuanian stae." This was reported today by IZVESTIYA. The deputies have based their decision on "aggressive actions on the part of the USSR" and "a possible active occupation of Lithuania."

This was also the subject of another, larger document: A decision "On the conduct and actions by the institutions of power and citizens of the Lithuanian Republic if there is active occupation by the USSR." In particular it has outlawed all other structures of administration in addition to the ones that have been enforced recently. The republican institutions of power and officials have been instructed not to cooperate with the "occupiers." Lithuanian citizens must not comply with them and must put up resistance. They have the right to use all possible means and methods to protect themselves and others.

In the definition of the Lithuanian legislators, the moment when "force is used to limit the power of the legally elected Supreme Soviet, as the supreme state power body" will be considered as the beginning of "an active occupation." The provisional defense leadership of the republic will inform when to put up organized reistance, IZVESTIYA said.

Lithuanian Official on Increased Military Activity

LD0403132691 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Interview with Audrius Butkevicius, general director of the Lithuanian Defense Department, by correspondent Vitas Usas; place not given—live]

[Excerpts] [Usas] Esteemed Butkevicius, last night we [words indistinct] that listeners. People were calling the Supreme Council Information Bureau reporting an increase in Soviet Army activity in Lithuania. Do you have any more specific information on this?

[Butkevicius] Well, true [words indistinct] The Soviet Army is starting to [words indistinct] On the other hand, additional armored equipment units are being assembled in Lithuania. For example, yesterday in Trakai Rayon [words indistinct] 100 units of various types of armored battle equipment were unloaded from [word indistinct] [passage omitted]

[Usas] Has this equipment been brought in from the Soviet Union or is this simply movement of armed group units taking place within Lithuania?

[Butkevicius] The majority of these is not yet [word indistinct] especially in view of the fact that earlier a riflemen's division had been brought to the northern townlet, the so-called [word indistinct] category and now the [word indistinct] category. That constitutes a full complement. Similar activity is going on in Klaipeda. There [passage indistinct] Additional military units are being stationed in Lithuania [word indistinct] There are many of them. [passage omitted]

For example, regular armed patrols again appeared in the city on Saturday and Sunday. Patrols from Gediminas Prospectas attempted to cross into the republic Supreme Council building territory and only withdrew after people stopped them. More similar situations exist.

[Usas] Moreover, do you not think this could be a certain type of reconnoitering activity, this appearance of patrols in the Supreme Council building [word indistinct]?

[Butkevicius] Of course, today they all [words indistinct]. It is one of those critical periods when provocations [word indistinct] This is attested to also by the explosion that has taken place. It is obvious why this was done. VREMYA has directly issued information on the reasons behind this to demonstrate that pressure is applied in Lithuania, with the approaching Soviet Union's March referendum in mind. I think the situation is tense and perhaps the provocation took place without organization. There are forces present here which stimulate such provocations. [passage omitted] On the other hand, the country's defense system is functioning. The police system is functioning; it is by no means paralyzed. [passage omitted]

[Usas] Thank you. That was Audrius Butkevicius, general director of Lithuania's Defense Department.

Citizens Reminded To Report Military Moves

LD0203203491 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1900 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Public service announcement]

[Text] The Supreme Council Information Bureau reminds the people of Lithuania to call anytime, on a 24-hour basis, the following telephone numbers in Vilnius if they observe military movements in the republic: The Vilnius city code is 8-22; 62-84-23; and 61-68-16.

Bickauskas Forecasts 'New Blow' to Lithuania

LD0203233191 Vilnius International Service in Lithuanian 2200 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] According to the Lithuanian Government representative in Moscow, Egidijus Bickauskas, the signing of Lithuania's agreement with Russia, and especially its ratification, is becoming complicated, following Russian leader Boris Yeltsin's television statement last week. The agreement has been totally prepared and signed, that is,

the authorized representatives who prepared it have affixed individual signatures to all agreement paragraphs.

According to unofficial information, Russia hopes to have a separate document concerning the Kaliningrad region signed along with the interstate agreement, which, in essence, is not an obstacle for Lithuania; however, it simply has not been prepared yet.

According to known information, the open challenge by Boris Yeltsin to President Gorbachev has rallied the forces opposing Russia's leader, even within the Russian legislature itself, which is why a threat has arisen for the agreement with Lithuania.

In the estimation of the Lithuanian Government representative in Moscow, Egidijus Bickauskas, Lithuania may receive a new blow from the USSR in three to four months, when the USSR economic situation worsens to a large extent, and accordingly, in Lithuania itself, as well, according to the Lithuanian representative's assertion. In his opinion, the new delegation for negotiations with Lithuania that has been formed by the Soviet Union's president is not authorized to deliberate Soviet Union-Lithuania relations on a state level. Certain actual economic, seized building return, and perhaps also, army questions, may be deliberated through the Kremlin delegation. According to Egidijus Bickauskas, our government could make up its delegation, which could associate with the new Kremlin delegation. The authority of the Lithuanian state delegation must not be diminished in relations with lower level Soviet Union's delegation representatives. This was stated by the Lithuanian government representative in Moscow, Egidijus Bickauskas, in an interview with the newspaper LIETUVOS RYTAS.

Martial Law in Lithuania Described

LD0103133791 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1105 GMT 1 Mar 91

[From the press review]

[Text] GIMTASIS KRASTAS [Native Land] in its new section called "A school of Partisans" carries an article entitled "martial law and how to resist it."

Martial law—probably it will be called the introduction of presidential rule—would most likely be introduced some Saturday night so that large enterprises, high schools, and offices would be unable to immediately start resistance by organizing strikes and demonstrations, and so on. At the same time many soldiers would emerge on the strests, ready to shoot at the first order. Telephone communications would be interrupted, more precisely, they would be at the disposal of the authorities, the military, the militia, and security organs. Vitally important industry branches would be militarized, bank savings would be blocked, and borders would be closed. A curfew would be introduced, and dealing with the violators of martial law in courts would be speeded up. Most newspapers would be stopped, the work of communal services would be restricted, and so on.

Most likely, preventive arrests of all potential enemies of the regime and of people of great prestige would be widely applied. For instance, all opposition activists were arrested in Poland. The main aim of martial law is to control the whole society through total persecution. But even then resistance is not only possible but also essential. Many methods of resistance were tested during the martial law in Poland. These methods are described on the second page of this week's GIMTASIS KRASTAS.

RSFSR

Deputies Debate Slander Charge, Price Hike Bill

LD0103202591 Moscow TASS in English 1953 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS legislative correspondents Lev Aksenov and Yuriy Kozmin]

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—The Russian parliament today declined the Soviet procurator-general's request to strip a Russian people's deputy of his immunity enabling the country's chief prosecutor to institute criminal proceedings against him.

The deputy, Artem Tarasov, is charged with "slandering the Soviet president." The charge was brought against him following Tarasov's television interview, in which he referred to a "secret document" on transferring four Kuril Islands to Japan in exchange for a 200 billion dollar injection into the Soviet economy by that country. The president's name was mentioned in this context.

The Russian parliament found unsatisfactory the explanations of the procurator-general's request by his Deputy Aleksey Vasiliyev.

Also today, a most important bill was submitted for consideration by the Russian parliament. It deals with the problem of concern for Russia's entire multi-million population. The bill is to regulate the procedure for income indexation in connection with price rises.

Russian Labour Minister Rafik Batkayev told the parliament in his introductory address that price rises were "forced by necessary measures" entailing a rise in the cost of living, that will amount to one half of the total annual income of the Russian population. The bill defines the procedure for income indexation which will help cushion the unfavorable effects of the price rise.

In a brief discussion that followed the introduction of the bill some proposals were voiced. It was decided to pass the bill to parliamentary committees and commissions for a thorough study.

The parliament then adjourned its further sessions. Deputies are due to go to their constituencies to take part

in preparations for two referenda, national and republican, scheduled for March 17.

In his closing remarks at today's session, Russian vice-president Ruslan Khasbulatov stressed the great significance of the forthcoming referenda.

After the polls, the Russian parliament will meet again to finalise preparations for the Third Extraordinary Congress of Russian People's Deputies, the parent parliament, which is due to open in Moscow on March 28.

Deputy Premier Filshin Relieved of Duties

LD0203113791 Moscow TASS in English 1314 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—The Russian parliament today completed the discussion of the notorious case concerning an intended sale of 140 billion roubles. The parliament passed a resolution on the results of deputies' inquiry into the circumstances of the deal between the firm dove trading international and The Ural Countryside Revival Association.

The contemplated deal was to sell 140 billion roubles to the firm for U.S. dollars. Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Gennadiy Filshin had at one time signed a letter in which he promised support for the deal.

Many experts believe that such a contract would be greatly detrimental to the interests of Russia and that the foreign firm itself has a questionable reputation.

Neither do such actions promote the strengthening of the international prestige of the Russian Government. The USSR Procurator's Office has instituted criminal proceedings while Filshin tendered his resignation in view of widespread criticisms being levelled at him.

The Russian parliament in its resolution gave a negative evaluation of the actions of a number of Russian Government members in the choice of a foreign trading partner.

The parliament decided to relieve Filshin of his duties and warned a number of Russian ministers, including the ministers for foreign economic relations and trade, about their "partial professional inadequacy."

The republican government was instructed to elaborate and endorse, before March 20, basic provisions for a procedure for concluding agreements and contracts between ministries, departments and organisations of Russia and foreign firms. The republican government should submit information on all such contracts to the parliamentary committees and commissions.

Officials Sign Statement Criticizing Yeltsin

LD2802210291 Moscow TASS in English 0618 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow February 27 TASS—Errors in the handling of economic and legal issues by the Russian Federation parliament and a striving to clearly express their position and dissociate themselves from extreme forces in the republican parliament itself—were the principal motives of the statement issued by six out of eight leaders of the Russian parliament.

The statement, which, in particular, criticised parliament President Boris Yeltsin, was read out on February 21 and gave rise to widespread and non-uniform reactions in the republic.

During their appearance on Soviet television today, Vladimir Isakov, chairman of the Council of the Republic, and Ramazan Abdulatipov, chairman of the Council of Nationalities of the Russian Federation parliament, explained reasons that prompted them to sign the document.

According to the authors' concept, the statement was to avert a final split of society and help determine whether the Russian parliament should "proceed along the road of confrontation with the centre or tackle the entire package of urgent socio-economic problems."

Abdulatipov noted the fact that the statement bears the signatures of supporters of various political platforms. In this connection he refuted assertions that appeared in some media that the statement was prompted by the leadership of the Soviet Communist Party. He said the document was aimed at straightening matters out when the parliament over a period of many months has not been contributing to rectifying the state of affairs in the republic

Isakov, for his part, emphasised that none of the arguments set out in the political statement was disproved by opponents who unfoundedly accused the authors of the document of betrayal.

Attempt To 'Discredit' Yeltsin Alleged

LD0203151791 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1301 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] The INTERFAX News Agency has published the reply to the statement of the six. Ten members of the Presidium of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet, among whom are Ruslan Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet, and a number of other heads of committees and commissions, have conveyed to parliament a document giving an appraisal of the statement of the six, read out several days ago by Boris Yeltin's deputy, Svetlana Goryacheva.

They consider that the authors' true aim was to discredit Boris Yeltsin and to try to pin on him all the blame for the session of the Supreme Soviet and the Government

of Russia, which do not yet possess sufficient experience. The irresponsible action of the six who signed the political statement has stirred up the whole country and has, to an even greater extent, exacerbated the political situation in the republic. The authors, making use of their official positions, attempted to mislead public opinion in the republic about the position of the Supreme Soviet and its Presidium, the document says.

Poll Reveals Attitudes Toward Gorbachev

LD0203140891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] Mikhail Gorbachev, Nobel prize winner, USSR president, and general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee is 60 today. For six years he has been heading perestroyka. He intends to continue heading it, but already with a new credo.

Speaking in Minsk on 26 February, he said that in the conditions of democracy, political struggle is inevitable, but that it must be waged within the framework of legality, high political standards, and a comparison of positions.

As for those who still lack the maturity to see this, the people will finally realize whom they are dealing with; and in my view, the subject of today's anniversary noted, they are already beginning to do so.

The president from the people's point of view.

In the course of an all-Union poll conducted in February by the All-Union Center for the Study of All-Union Opinion among over 2,000 people, its participants were asked the question: What are Gorbachev's qualities as a politician?

According to 28 percent of the respondents, double-dealing and hypocrisy are the most characteristic traits of Gorbachev as a politician, INTERFAX reports. One-fifth of those polled believe that Gorbachev the politician is characterized by flexibility and the ability to maneuver. Approximately the same number of those polled believe that weakness and lack of confidence in himself are characteristic of the president. Eighteen percent of the participants in the poll think that the Soviet leader is displaying indifference to human victims. Thirteen percent named among Gorbachev's essential political qualities: frankness and straightforwardness. Only seven percent believe that the president is distinguished by the trait of decisiveness.

Such is the people's point of view on our president, who, today I remind you, is marking his 60th birthday.

Radio Rossii joins in the numerous congratulations to the president, which, by the way, we are also receiving via our editorial telephone. Among listeners wishing the president happiness and health is Muscovite Aleksandr Traykin, who claims that Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev has brought freedom to all of us. Well, it is difficult to argue with that.

Preparatory Group Proposes Agenda for Congress

LD0203193191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1900 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] Today saw the first meeting of the commission that is preparing for the Third Extraordinary Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Congress of People's Deputies. It was chaired by Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the republic's Supreme Soviet. Matters pertaining to the organizational arrangements for the congress were examined.

It has been decided to convene the Third Extraordinary RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies on 28 March this year in Moscow. It is proposed that the following matters be included on the congress agenda: the political and socioeconomic situation in the RSFSR and steps to escape from the crisis; the national state structure of the RSFSR; the Federation treaty; and the Union treaty.

Khasbulatov on Yeltsin Support, Referendum

LD0203184491 Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian 1535 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Interview with Russian Khasbulatov, first vice president of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, RSFSR, Supreme Soviet, by unidentified correspondent; from the "Legislative Herald" program; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] How serious will be the attempt to even the effort on the part of the Russian Communist bloc to implement its idea of forcing the resignation of Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin] after having heard him.

[Khasbulatov] It seems to me that certain forces are of course preparing something. I have no doubt that they very much dislike Yeltsin. Why? Because he is indeed trying to increase the independence of the Russian state. He is indeed trying to obtain greater independence for the republics that are members of Russia. He is indeed striving to add weight to the voice of the Union republics in deciding on the all-Union policy. But he has always been in favor of the Union and the preservation of the Union as a single and renewed Union. I am in favor of this.

But still there will be attempts to push him. And you can see for yourselves that for so many months now the Soviet press and television and (?radio) are literally waging a harassment campaign against the chairman of the [RSFSR] Supreme Soviet. What we are banking on, if the attempts are very serious, is that our people have enough knowledge and intelligence to sort out for themselves what everyone is worth.

I believe that our electorate will have a very serious influence on their deputies. Therefore, we wanted to adopt a law on recall of deputies as soon as possible so as to give the electorate a real instrument to influence their deputies. This procedure exists in any democratic

society. I think that I, personally, am least of all worried about holding on to my own post.

I am busy trying to unite the Supreme Soviet and our government and to make it possible for it to work normally. But if there are people who think that somebody else will cope better than I, be my guest, I will not question this. I believe that Boris Nikolayevich, as a recognized leader of Russia, must of course stay in his post. I cannot see any other person who could prevent upheavals or major conflicts in these very complex, exceptionally complex conditions. Look for yourselves: Despite all the difficulties, there are no bloody conflicts in Russia, thank God. Does this not show that Yeltsin can see his tasks very well, managing to handle these processes? People are heeding to his authoritative voice. Those who try to force him out should think about this. After all, this must be taken into account. Generally, one must lend more thought to things.

On 17 March I will call on all our fellow countrymen to vote for an all-Union referendum, that is, for the preservation of a renewed state, and for an RSFSR referendum. I call on our citizens to go to the ballot boxes together and to vote for the RSFSR to have a head of state. Currently we have no head of state, and therefore we cannot implement any intensive or effective policy or halt the forces which are obstructing the implementation of our economic policy. The main factor that stalls our reform and prevents us from implementing reforms is resistance on the part of various structures, including various party committees. Many soviets have an enormous number of bureaucrats too. They literally foil our decisions. For as long as Russia has no head of state, it will have no effective power. Therefore we need this. After all, almost all republics are either trying to shape the presidential power or have already enforced it.

In Russia there is also resistance on this score. They just do not want us to have a president in Russia. Why? Because they want Russia to be segmented and feeble. Then it can be pushed around by anyone who finds it pleasing. Therefore, I wish to address our electorate and our fellow countrymen, and I want to ask them to vote for presidential power in Russia on 17 March, to make it possible for us above all to implement our economic policy effectively in the interests of our people and our fellow countrymen, so as to give our people its appropriate place among other civilized peoples.

Moscow Mayor Popov Rumored To Resign

LD0203225291 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] Finally, here is a report that has not been confirmed by any official sources. All this belongs to the category of rumors, as the saying goes. But there is no smoke without fire.

A listener called us at the editorial office and said, quoting Anatoliy Sobchak, who had spoken today on Leningrad television, that according to the claims made by the chairman of the Leningrad City Soviet, his Moscow colleague Gavriil Popov has tendered his resignation. Regarding himself, Anatoliy Sobchak allegedly said that it is up to Leningrad inhabitants to decide.

According to the same listener, in Sverdlovsk the situation is turbulent, too. There, too, forecasts have been made that the chairman of the city soviet, who is a democrat, is to tender his resignation. I repeat that the infomation that has just been reported has not been confirmed, despite all our efforts. All the better if all this is just rumors.

Rumor Proved False

LD0303215591 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] Radio Rossii reported yesterday a rumor that Gavriil Popov, chairman of the Moscow City Soviet, had resigned. Fortunately, this rumor proved to be wrong. We wish Gavriil Kharitnovich success in his further work.

Kuzbass Workers Call for 4 Mar Strike

LD0303114691 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] We have just received some news about our country: the Kuzbass Council of Workers' Committees has decided to hold a political strike on 4 March. The Council of Workers' Committees has asked labor collectives to express their lack of confidence in, and demand the resignation of, the USSR president, the Union bodies of power, and with the leadership of the country transfering to the Federation Council.

There have also been demands for the mass media to be transferred to Russia. A session of the Kemerovo Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies considers the strike intolerable, and has called on working people not to stop working at enterprises.

Majority Against Coal Strike

LD0303130491 Moscow TASS in English 1248 GMT 3 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Grigoriy Shalakin]

[Text] Kemerovo March 3 TASS—It seems that only one among 30-odd sociopolitical organisations registered in Kemerovo region—the Council of Workers' Committees of the Kuznetsk coal basin—is not interested in the stability of the situation in this industrial area. The council's decision to hold a political strike on March 4 cannot be assessed otherwise.

The Council of Workers' Committees proposed that the Kuzbass miners mount a motion of no-confidence in the president and demand that the president and the Union power bodies resign and hand over the leadership of the country to the Federation Council. It also demanded that mass media be turned over to Russia.

A session of the Kemerovo regional governing council recognised the strike as inadmissible and called upon the working people not to stop the operation of enterprises.

In his appeal to fellow citizens, Aman Tuleyev, chairman of the Kemerovo regional governing council, described the strike as "the most dangerous form of putting demands".

"Those who are calling on the residents of the industrial region for this form of protest, are making Kuzbass small change, a hostage in the political struggle," the appeal stresses.

"The strike will not add happiness to Kuzbass itself and its population of three million. Countries escape from crisis by increasing production and accomplishing creative endeavours rather than by downing tools."

"However, coal production in Kuzbass went down to the level of 1966 today," Tuleyev said.

Miners from the third section of the Abashevskaya pit in the city of Novokuznetsk told TASS they did not have time for a strike and that the action was unprofitable to them. Managers of Kuznetskugol, the largest coal mining concern in the country, into which the Abashevskaya pit is also incorporated, said that all mines committed to bring out some 60,000 tons of coal a day.

According to information received from various sources, part of workers at individual enterprises supports the labour action by the Council of Workers' Committees, but the majority of miners do not intend to go on strike.

The council's call for a political strike, issued on January 18, also failed to receive support in any of the workers' collectives in the region.

Few Mines Observe Strike

LD0403104691 Moscow TASS in English 1017 GMT 4 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Grigoriy Shalakin]

[Text] Kemerovo March 4 TASS—It was business as usual at most of the 100-odd mines in Kuzbass today.

Only three pits in Leninsk-Kuznetsk, Berezovsk and Novokuznetsk mining areas partially downed tools after a call by the Council of Kuzbass Workers' Committees.

The council called on Kuzbass work collectives to demand the resignation of President Mikhail Gorbachev and central authorities, the transfer of power to the Federation Council and depolitisation of Interior Ministry bodies, the KGB and the Army.

Before the morning shift, Soviet Coal Minister Mikhail Shchadov, on a visit to the region, spoke to miners.

Miners are being intentionally misinformed about the situation in the industry, he said.

Most mining areas are working normally, he said. On Sunday six mines should have been working according to plan. Instead, nine pits were working, considerably overfullfiling the quota, Shchadov said.

However, passions are simmering in Kuzbass. A total of 5,700 rail carriages of coal were loaded today, 500 carriages short of the plan, officials if the Kemerovo Regional Council Executive Committee told TASS.

A huge rally began in Prokopyevsk this morning with speakers calling on miners to support the demand by the Council of Kuzbass Workers' Committees.

Karaganda Coal Workers Union Suspend Strike

LD0203232691 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 2230 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] The executive committee of the Karaganda territorial council of the trade union of coal workers adopted a decision of 2 March to suspend the strike of the coalfield workers which they initiated. The coal enterprises should resume operation today, 3 March, starting at midnight. It was considered that the country and the republican governments have started to examine coal workers' demands. If no specific measures are undertaken by 30 March, the trade union council reserves the right to continue the strike.

Leningrad Sailors Plan Strike Over Food Prices

PM0403115591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 Mar 91 Second Edition p 3

[Correspondent V. Gerasimov report: "Paying Six Times More for Lunch?.."]

[Text] Leningrad, 1 Mar—Baltic Shipping Line workers and Leningrad dockers intend to temporarily suspend work on ships and in the port of Lenigrad next Monday. They will take this warning action in line with a resolution of their trade union committees, unless shipping line and port leaders come up with effective measures before the expiry of the deadline to offset growing expenditure for food. According to approximate estimates, the cost of lunches in workers' canteens in the port, at the ship repair yard, and on ships has increased by five to six times.

What has caused the conflict? S. Igolkin, general director of the "Torgmortrans" Association, with reference to a 7 January USSR Ministry of Trade regulation, notified shipping line and port leaders a few days ago that until new wholesale prices for livestock products—that is meat, milk, and cheese—are set, these goods will be supplied to the seamen's table at price-list prices [prices reflecting cost of purchase of products set by regions from which these products originate]. The notification also contains the pious wish that the shipping line and port administration, jointly with the trade union organization, should adopt a decision on subsidizing the rising prices. According to information received from the port

and the shipping line, the collectives simply do not have this sort of money. After all, it is a question of feeding more than 40,000 people!

We cannot let people have the products at the former fixed prices either, S. Polonskaya, chief book-keeper of the "Rosmyasomoltorg" [a Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic meat and dairy products trade organization] explained to me. We now have to be guided by the price lists approved by the republics. For example, meat delivered from the Baltic republics costs 9 rubles [R] per kilo, while meat from the neighboring Pskov Oblast costs R13. The menu in workers' canteens will be formed on the basis of such widely varying price-list prices. Only the price for meat delivered to retail trade outlets and the city's public catering network in exchange for coupons remains unchanged. In this case it is our budget which is hit. After all, the "Rosmyasomoltorg" is having to buy livestock produce at prices specified in the republican price lists! We are on the brink of bankruptcy—the Leningrad City Soviet has run up a debt of R53 million during the last two months alone.

A seamen's strike, even if it is just a warning strike, is not the best way out of the situation. In any case it will not contribute to the improvement of the overall economic situation. People are saying more and more often that it is necessary to get to the root of conflicts which stem from the uncontrolled price formation process in the country. In the war of laws and the vying of prices which have been allowed to drift out of control, the poor will become destitute.

Deputy Goryacheva Recalled to Vladivostok

LD0303233791 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] According to a report from Vladivostok, from Deputy Aleksandr Ryabakov of the kray soviet, a meeting of the electorate has taken place in the town's Leninskiy Rayon, from which the notorious Svetlana Goryacheva was elected deputy to the Supreme Soviet of Russia. It has decided to recall their deputy.

To the suggestion by USSR Supreme Soviet Deputy Shelkunov that Deputy Goryacheva has a right to a personal opinion, the audience reacted in the following way: She must express not her own opinion, but that of her electorate: and these two opinions disagree fundamentally.

Western Republics

Further Reportage on Gorbachev Belorussia Visit

Tour of Gomel Oblast Detailed

PM0103120191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Second Edition pp 1, 2

[Report by special correspondents A. Nikitin, A. Simurov, and A. Ulitenok under the rubric "Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow" and the general heading "USSR President in Belorussia": "You Cannot Overcome a Disaster On Your Own"]

[Text] Gomel Oblast—It looked as though the unexpected thick fog had upset all plans for the second day of the president's visit, and cars had to be used instead of an airplane to travel to the "epicenter" of the Belorussian zone affected by Chernobyl.

"Maybe it was better this way," M.S. Gorbachev said during his first conversation with the inhabitants of the countryside. "You could somehow sense the full intensity of the misfortune that has befallen Gomel Oblast."

People admitted openly to Mikhail Sergeyevich that they had been waiting for him for a long time, and therefore, aware of the complexity of the times and the fact that he is very busy, they value the fact that they were not disappointed. Nor did the inhabitants of Gomel Oblast conceal from the country's leader their hopes, because, as they put it, the future of the oblast and its population is at stake. What did they mean?

Virtually the whole population is still living on the territory that was affected by radionuclides. A total of 218,000 hectares of land has been taken out of use. The mass migration of the population has begun. Many enterprises are threatened with closure. Thirty eight kolkhozes [collective farms] and sovkhozes [state farms] have already been disbanded. In a word, the sociopolitical situation in the oblast is rapidly and sharply becoming more complex. Alarm and uncertainty about the future are increasing. At every meeting, people were asking the same question: How are they to live from now on?

Answers were jointly sought. Everyone agreed that the union-republic program of urgent measures for 1990-1992 which was adopted earlier, and the USSR Council of Ministers and All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions resolution were helping to a certain extent. In the first year, 24,600 people were resettled from 95 population centers. Then a further 13,805 families were resettled eslewhere. Altogether, 73,000 people were resettled following the accident. But this is very little.

...Vetkovskiy Rayon is perhaps a special part of Belorussia. The point is that its history is closely linked with the runaway peasant old believers. And even now they live in the old villages, in large families in sturdy two-room dwellings. But history is less and less on people's minds here. People are mainly perturbed about the future. There is only one thought—to leave as quickly as possible. And they are going away, leaving behind homes that have been inhabited for centuries and furnished with love. There are whole rural soviets where only old people remain, and one-third of farms have been destroyed...

Among other places, M.S. Gorbachev visited the former Zakruzhye Rural Soviet. We noticed the pain in the president's eyes when he looked at the fields that were

overgrown with thistles, houses that were so sturdy yesterday and are now falling down through not being looked after, agricultural complexes that have been abandoned—and the kilometers of highway without a soul in sight, without the slightest sound of life... The "40 Let Oktyabrya" Kolkhoz was closed down literally a few days ago, and its land has been...written off. In the central farmstead, there is a glimmer of life in just three houses now. Many neighboring farmsteads have simply been ransacked by gangs of looters. They break the locks, chop up any remaining furniture, smash the windows, and haphazardly rip out the frames, the floor boards, and the doors with their frames... We talked to the last proprietors of Staroye Zakruzhye.

Domna Antonovna Muzykina:

"Where am I, an invalid, to go? No one needs me, life has turned out in such a way that I have no relatives left. And the 'merchants' from the uncontaminated areas are looking for young, healthy people, they need tractor drivers, milkmaids—working people..."

Tatyana Kirillovna Kuzhelnaya:

"I am a believer and I think that it is a sin to leave your native land. The other day our neighbor Vladimir Andreyevich Ksendzov came to see us, and he burst into tears. When I die, he said, my relatives will not even come say goodbye, because they are scattered all over the country and some of them cannot even get round to dropping me a line."

Zakruzhye is a relatively small village, but neighboring Bartolomeyevka numbered nearly 2,000 inhabitants five years ago. Now there are only just over 100 left. Where have they gone? They went to Belorussia, Siberia, to the Far East... This is a tragedy, people's family and social ties that have formed over the centuries have been destroyed all at once, and the distinctive, unique culture is dying...

M.S. Gorbachev asked specifically about the state of the health service. There is an outward appearance of concern about it—a beautiful rayon polyclinic has been built. But there is a disastrous shortage of physicians, and because of that they have had to use the system of drafting physicians on a temporary basis, with all its imperfections.

"So what happened—did the physicians perceive the danger and did they therefore worry first of all about saving their own skins?"

"Alas, Mikhail Sergeyevich, you are right. That is how it was. There is a growing incidence of disease. Rising by a factor of 1.5-2. And children are the cause of special alarm..."

According to A. Kondrusev, USSR deputy minister of health, the situation as a whole is under control, but the president's pointed questions, coupled with rejoinders by the local inhabitants, raised doubts whether the Ministry of Health leadership has clearly determined its position and is coping with its tasks. And indeed, science as a whole clearly owes a great deal to the hostages of Chernobyl, but is not in any hurry to pay off the debts it incurred earlier.

Problems, problems, problems... Five years of experiments, mistakes, and expectations have made people embittered, V. Prikhodko, chairman of Bartolomeyevka Rural Soviet, explains, and have infected people's souls with mistrust and indifference—that is the most terrible thing.

How else can people react if in neighboring Zakruzhye they continued to build new housing well into fall of last year, housing that no one needed any more—14 blocks were made available on a turnkey basis! And then all the keys had to be handed into the rural soviet—from both the new houses and the old ones. Handing them over, people left their hearts behind along with yet another dashed hope. Is it any wonder that the prestige of the leading lights of science from Moscow and Minsk is not worth a dime here any more and that people do not trust the leadership? Neither their own local leadership, nor the republic leadership, nor the center. "They dropped us in it!", people kept saying. Bitter words, perhaps not always fair, but you cannot fail to understand these people and take their pain to heart.

If what has been said seems to some people to be just emotional excesses, then here are the facts. Every other Vetka village is to be evacuated, but no one knows where his fate will take him and when. There is no single, coordinated, and economically substantiated program for a comprehensive solution of the most acute problem to this day.

The zone does not need words now. It needs action. Specific action—an enormous quantity of new housing needs to be built. Let us stress: Not individual houses, scattered around various villages, kolkhozes, and rayons. Whole settlements must be constructed in order to ensure the resettlement of villages. And farms. The inhabitants of Chernobyl have earned this right with the five years of their unbelievable suffering. And one of the president's tasks is not just to investigate on the spot and help people, but also to rebuild their faith in the future.

A broad program of medical monitoring and treatment and provision of material assistance in the construction of housing for people resettled from the zone, has been discussed. Many other measures are being planned.

We will have to have another look at how to put things right, the president stressed. A total of 10.3 billion rubles [R] has been allocated from this year's Union budget to eliminate the consequences of the accident, and this includes over R3.8 for Belorussia. Questions concerning the medical service, particularly children's health protection, must be resolved immediately.

Misfortune has a free rein when it is dealing with people who are divided and lacking a common will or aim. That is why, many of the president's interlocutors said, it is

time to make more careful use of rather divisive tools like the parading of republic sovereignties, the crisscross of conflicting laws, and the political demogoguery of home-grown "theoreticians." It must not be forgotten that the Chernobyl tragedy affected three republics. And none of them—be it Belorussia, the Ukraine, or Russia—will be able to rid themselves of this misfortune by their own efforts.

After M.S. Gorbachev's visit to the population centers in the zone of the radioactive contamination, he had a meeting in Gomel with the oblast's party, soviet, and economic aktiv, where the discussion of the problems continued.

M.S. Gorbachev noted that the issue of creating a serious research center here was justifiably brought up at the meetings. However, its organization has been delayed, and this question must be resolved urgently. And of course, a medical service system that would give people an opportunity of receiving regular consultations and knowing what is going on, so that individuals can be given assistance on time, must be formed without delay.

I understand that restoration is a major problem, the president said, and I realize that without the center, without the assistance and support of other republics, it will be difficult for you to solve this problem. I think that all this must be examined. I agree that a union law on social protection for the victims is needed. M.S. Gorbachev reiterated the resolve of the country's leadership to complete the preparation of this document in the immediate future.

I think, he said, that Belorussia has the right to count on both moral and material support. You cannot get accustomed to a calamity, or be calm about it, or reconcile yourself with it. The more so as new problems are arising. We have to act!

Tomorrow M.S. Gorbachev will continue his tour of Belorussia in the "Chernobyl" areas of Mogilev Oblast.

N. Dementey, chairman of the Belorussian SSR [Soviet Socialsit Republic] Supreme Soviet, accompanied him on the tour of the oblast.

Gorbachev Visits Contamination Zone

PM0103142991 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 1 Mar 91 First Edition p 1

[TASS special correspondent report: "Impossible to Get Used to Misfortune. M.S. Gorbachev's Meetings on Gomel Soil"]

[Excerpt] Gomel, 27 Feb—[passage omitted] Gomel Oblast has been affected by this tragedy [Chernobyl] more than any region. Two-thirds of the Belorussian population affected by the disaster lives here. Precisely 1,205 of the oblast's cities and villages found themselves in the contamination zone. Much has been done in four years to heal the wounds of Chernobyl, both through the republics' efforts and under special union programs. As recent research has shown, the radiation situation in many rayons, however, is still far from calm. At the first stage after the accident, the oblast was given the necessary moral and material assistance but, as people who live here claim, with time the acuteness of the disaster began to become dulled.

From 1988 until the adoption of the Union-republic program of urgent measures for 1990-1992, the oblast was allocated capital investments, equipment, and other material resources only to carry out decontamination work and to provide public services and amenities in individual population centers. At the same time, as a result of defining more precisely the radiation situation and the dose loads on the human organism, the Belorussian Supreme Soviet adopted a decision on the additional resettlement of a further 202 population centers, where approximately 30,000 families live. By 1 February this year, just 11,000 of them had been moved. The further implementation of this work is being held up by a lack of funds. This is why it is so essential for the whole country to come to the assistance of the Belorussian land now.

And now his [Gorbachev's] first conversations in Gomel Oblast. The village of Bartolomeyevka, then the village of Staroye Zaokruzhye. Mikhail Sergeyevich found it hard to contain his emotion on listening to the inhabitants' tales of woe. All is still not well with the delivery of foodstuffs from other rayons (nothing from the local truck gardens may be used for food). It is painful to hear the conclusion of local physicians, who maintain that infants and school children have contracted illnesses which clearly bear the mark of Chernobyl. Not all is well with the organization of the children's summer vacation. Not that you can, in fact, accuse anyone of malicious intent. The leadership of the rayon, the oblast, and the republic—and today the president himself too—say that this misfortune is not just for one year. It is clearly necessary to defer a lot of expenditure, even that which is urgent for the state, so that people can be confident that the misfortune is retreating.

After conversations with villagers at the executive committee of the rayon center of Vetka, M.S. Gorbachev met with representatives of rayons which have suffered because of the disaster. He invited leaders of the Belorussian Council of Ministers and the Union and republic Ministries of Health to participate in the conversation.

The acuteness of the problems was depicted still more clearly during this conversation. Everyone is particularly dissatisfied with the situation regarding medical backup. In Vetka, for example, there is a hospital equipped with excellent medical equipment, including specialized radiological equipment. But, owing to the shortage of cadres, the effectiveness of the medics' labor is low. Matters concerning the supply of foodstuffs are also depressing.

M.S. Gorbachev pointed out that he wanted to listen to everyone and to understand the present situation and

which way things are moving—for better or for worse. Everyone has a great misfortune, and joint efforts must be used to rectify it. Belorussians have known how to cope with both swamps and ruin, and they got to know how to live without bread and without a harvest, particularly during the war years. But this misfortune is so huge that you do not know what awaits you tomorrow.

We will have to look once again at how to rectify matters, the president emphasized. Some 10.3 billion rubles [R] have been allocated from the Union budget for this year to eliminate the aftermath of the accident. This includes more than R3.8 billion for Belorussia. Questions of medical services, particularly children's health care, must be resolved without delay.

After M.S. Gorbachev's tour of population centers in the zone of radioactive contamination, he had a meeting in Gomel with representatives of labor collectives from all rayons of the oblast. [passage omitted]

Gorbachev Voices Concern

PM0103161191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 1 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[Correspondent N. Matukovskiy report: "M.S. Gorbachev in Belorussia: Meetings in Gomel Region"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] How are people to be protected from radiation and how are they to be cured if they have been exposed to radiation? How is its pernicious influence on animate and inanimate nature to be averted, what barrier can be erected to prevent its further spread? This was the theme of Mikhail Sergeyevich's conversation with party, soviet, and medical workers, farm leaders, and residents of hamlets and villages in Vetka (a rayon center in the Gomel region).

It was not by chance that Vetka was chosen as the venue for this discussion. Tens of thousands of people, including almost 5,000 children, live here on this territory contaminated by radionuclides. Out of 140 population centers 70 are subject to evacuation. So far 28 villages have been relocated. People are using every means they can to leave the area in order to protect if not themselves then at least their children. The worst thing is that the first to leave the region are those who ought to be last—medical workers. Vetkovskiy Rayon has only 40 percent of its complement of physicians today.

"I cannot imagine that doctors would have left a front-line hospital and abandoned the wounded," Mikhail Sergeyevich said emotionally. "But you have something like the front line here. Do the doctors who have left understand that? And are they still considered doctors now that they have broken the Hippocratic oath?"

Belorussian Health Minister V. Kazakov acted as "counsel for the defense" on the platform. The discussion was held in the meeting hall of the rayon soviet executive committee and was relayed to the square where there was a crowd of hundreds, inhabitants of the rayon center and those who had come from surrounding villages to the meeting with the president. Mikhail Sergeyevich had already managed to talk with many of them. There was a sharp dialogue with the republic's health minister. From the dialogue it became clear that the ministry has done far from everything it could to safeguard people's health in the affected regions. There is a shortage of essential medicines and vitamins, medical equipment, and uncontaminated food.

The hall began to buzz when A. Kondrusev, the USSR chief medical officer of health, who had worked in Belorussia before, came to the platform. He ought to know the true situation better than anyone else. But does he? Mikhail Sergeyevich demanded answers to specific questions: Is the medical service absolutely clear about what specifically needs to be done first in regions affected by radiation? What should be done after that? What are the "parameters" which necessitate the immediate evacuation of people from the zone?

Alas, Kondrusev did not provide absolute clarity. The argument that mankind still does not have enough experience of combating radiation of this kind is flimsy. The almost five years since the Chernobyl catastrophe has given us that "experience." But unfortunately there has still been no adequate response to the situation which occurred. Just as there is still no precise medical demarcation: Where does the psychological stress produced by the state of alarm and ignorance "come into play," and where does pathology begin? Where does radiophobia end and true illness begin? After all, there has been a noticeable increase in certain illnesses, for example, malignant tumors, diseases of the lymph and hemopoietic organs, leukosis, and pneumonia. Of course, they are not all directly related to the effect of radiation but there is no doubt that it encourages them.

At this meeting with the president there was also a discussion on where to resettle people from the afflicted zones, how to provide them with work in their new location, and how to organize medical treatment for a great many people, above all children.

This discussion continued that evening in Gomel at a meeting with the oblast aktiv where M.S. Gorbachev delivered a speech and answered many questions from Gomel people. The questions related to all aspects of life today.

Gorbachev Mogilev Speech

PM0403125791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 Mar 91 Second Edition pp 1-2

[Unattributed report: "Acting Resolutely in the Interests of Stability, Civil Accord, and the Continuation of Reforms. M.S. Gorbachev's Speech at 28 February Meeting With City and Rayon, Enterprise, Farm, and Institution Leaders and War and Labor Veterans From Mogilev Oblast"]

[Text] Dear Comrades!

This meeting in your oblast, here in Bykhov, completes my stay in the republic. It has been brief, of course, but very fruitful for me in all respects.

First and foremost it has been an exercise in checking our political watches in a republic whose people enjoy great prestige by virtue of their commitment to lofty fundamental values and firmness in defending them and as a result of their courage and consistent creative activity. Knowing very well what periods of grave trials mean, the people of Belorussia have repeatedly felt support during their history and are themselves capable of generosity toward other peoples. From every viewpoint it has been very important for me to meet with you at this difficult, crucial period, when we are encumbered by so many concerns and by the burden of responsibility for adopting decisions which are bound to change the life of the country and all the peoples for decades to come.

Two of my three days have been spent in areas directly caught in the disaster zone. I regarded this as not only my human and moral duty and, of course, obligation. On behalf of the country's leadership and on my own account I wish to again express to Belorussia's working people, and particularly to those who live here, in these areas, our sincere sympathy in connection with the trials which have befallen you, and also your brothers in the Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

This trip has also enabled me to make a realistic assessment of everything that has been done in the intervening years to eliminate the consequences of the disaster and what still needs to be done. And a great deal needs to be done in the immediate future because the problem is so great that its solution cannot be deferred even for a year, even for a few months. And I welcome the efforts of republic and oblast organizations and all those involved in this. There are also questions here which the USSR Government and Supreme Soviet need to readdress. It is necessary to support the idea already enshrined in law by your republic's Supreme Soviet of social protection for people who were caught in these zones. A draft Union law on this conceptual basis has been elaborated with Russian and Ukrainian participation, and a preliminary [rabochiy] version is currently undergoing expert analysis and will be submitted to the USSR Supreme Soviet. Social protection for those who suffered must be guaranteed.

I am profoundly convinced that the problem of eliminating the consequences of the Chernobyl accident is our common concern, the concern of all the peoples of our multinational state. This is our common moral duty. And no matter how difficult this may be at this time—and maybe we still haven't got past the peak of the difficulties—nevertheless we cannot fail to do everything to provide you with real support.

And, you know, I cannot fail to share my impressions from my visit to the disaster zone. In general terms, everything that happened, all the grave consequences, constitute yet another serious warning to us all living today. And first and foremost they are a reminder to politicians of the need to build up common efforts to reduce the nuclear threat.

To this day we—an enormous country with such enormous potential—have not been able to cope with the consequences of an accident involving a single reactor at a single nuclear power station. One can imagine what would happen if there was even a conventional war which affected all nuclear reactors, not to mention a nuclear war. It is our duty to do everything for people here so they can return to a normal life and be protected against these consequences; and this is something we will have to work at for a long time yet. And it is our duty to all peoples to communicate to everyone a realization of what the power of the atom really means. We have seen it for ourselves. We have experienced it and now have a better understanding than other people of what it means. I see it as my duty as the country's president to achieve the successful completion and signing of a treaty on a 50-percent reduction in strategic arms. Although even 10 percent of what the United States and the Soviet Union possess is sufficient for them to destroy each other.

And there is also the point that you understand the full tragedy of something when you see human trouble at first hand, when people have been forced by unalterable circumstances to leave the places where were living, the places that were home, the places where they were born and raised and the ashes of their ancestors are buried, when the very pillars, the very foundations of life are destroyed.

But, comrades, in our country today this is not the only reason why people in their hundreds and thousands are leaving the places that they call home, where they have either lived for decades or moved sometime in the past in order to build, create, and fashion something on the land, where they have put down roots, lived and worked, but have now been forced to leave these lands primarily as a result of the exacerbation of interethnic problems. You can imagine how hard this is. And if we are taken in by separatist loudmouths and their slogans and take the path of putting them into practice we will destroy this great country, and conflicts from which we will all find it hard to extricate ourselves will break out. I therefore regard as very just and urgent the thought expressed by all those who have spoken with me in the past few days that everything must be done to to preserve and renew our homeland and give it second wind. All the peoples and all the republics need more oxygen. And this will be to the benefit of all the peoples.

And we must say this in the 17 March referendum.

For me the days that I have been in the republic are of considerable significance, as I have already noted, for hearing views, assessments, and proposals from you on the fundamental questions of the current decisive phase of transformations.

My first and main impression is that everybody resolutely advocates the continuation of reforms. Yes, we are

in favor of the renewal of our life. We must live in a human way, have discussions in the country of all the problems, and find the correct solutions without thinking that there is one person who alone possesses the truth. Under the conditions of the tension which we are currently experiencing and everything that has befallen us, attempts to set everything back in the old rut, on the old track are a delusion, a dangerous proposition. And this is often to be heard from people nostalgic for those old times. But we know that there are no answers to be found there. The answers, difficult though they are to find, must be found by looking forward. To ensure that these answers are found by fusing opinions and arguments and comparing views it is necessary to preserve an open and democratic atmosphere in society and remember that democracy can also be exploited by those who wish to bury and defeat perestroyka. We must therefore be resolute in maintaining order and legality in the country. I can see that working people in Belorussia, as throughout the country, are very concerned and very alarmed at the dangerous scale of destructive processes.

I resolutely favor economic and political stabilization, the strengthening of order, and ensuring that authority is authority, not jelly. When I say this today I am not threatening anyone; I am saying it primarily so that you know that I understand this. But I want this to be understood by those who are attempting to to take the values of perestroyka itself—democracy, glasnost, sovereignization, and the reforming of the Union—to really absurd lengths.

There are forces which are deforming democratic process and using glasnost for the benefit of their own ambitions and selfish ends. Reform on the basis of the sovereignization of our Union is also being taken to absurd lengths.

This is the way to destroy living tissue, living links, the functioning of a normal organism which has been decades or even centuries in the making. This is why a referendum is needed: so that the people can have their say on this main question. The people know rubbish when they see it.

My conviction as a person, conviction of the necessity of perestroyka, is such that I have to reiterate here, on Belorussian soil and to a Union-wide audience, that for me there is no return to the past. The future is the key to everything. There is no other road for me. I wish to restate this warning and to appeal to the reason and common sense of those who are pushing us from this path and who, in general, could cause a situation in which we would be inflicting a very serious blow on our political course, on perestroyka.

Because if things get as far as chaos, it is from chaos that dictatorship springs; that is clear. That has been the case everywhere. But if we preserve democratic processes, if there is order and the law operates firmly, then we will both avoid chaos and resolve the tasks along the path of the renewal of our society.

Recently I have again been asked both written and spoken questions. Some say: Mikhail Sergeyevich, when will everything become normal, when will everything start going well? When? Are you confident that we will emerge from the crisis, is there an action program? I want to say: Comrades, I am confident that there is a way out. We are on the right road. We must not alter our choice, we only need to go forward.

The thing we have started is vitally necessary for us and the entire country. The present critical situation is not in itself a disaster but a stage in the rebirth of our society. We have emerged from one system, the totalitarian, command system where everything used to be prescribed, even what kind of nail—with a head or without—had to be hammered how many centimeters deep in Mogilev. Is that leadership? Can you really lead in that way, within that kind of system, in a country inhabited by dozens of peoples, 15 sovereign republics, and 300 million individuals? It is impossible to live like that, comrades!

We have moved away from that, but we were belated about it and are being belated about other things, and not everything is working out for us, and there is no experience, and political measures are out of synch with economic and legal measures, while we still don't have a new system: These are reasons why we are being rocked and shaken. But let us gird up our stamina, let us move ahead and resolve matters more rapidly. We must shorten this transition period. We simply have to cope.

The prime need now is to stabilize economic ties because if there is a fall in production that will mean a decline in earnings, profits, and payments into the budget, which will in turn cause cracks to appear in all our programs, pensions, and so forth. Maintaining production and working—these will be the subjects for discussion at the next government session. Let us stabilize law and order. In order to be able to advance further along the path of transformations.

I think that it is already clear that the main thing today is the fate of our multinational state. This, I tell you straight, determines everything else—whether we can straighten out the situation in the economy, cope with crime, halt the growth of political confrontation, and really resolve the question of the fate of our Union. We need a strong Union state, not some amorphous entity which other states will disregard.

What is needed is a strong, multinational Union. This will be possible when the Union republics are strong. The dialectic is simple. This is what has to be done. A draft Union treaty is imminent. All the republics have worked on it and contributed a lot to it. I think that a stage is beginning where preparations should be made for the commission on the constitution and the preparation of a new constitution to resume its work.

We now need to go forward, coping with the difficulties and the disintegration in the national economy. To abide consistently by the course of creating market relations by

reforming property relationships, denationalizing and making a transition to a mixed economy, and implementing measures for the recovery of the financial and monetary situation.

We must regard the continuation of pricing reform and consistent steps toward the convertibility of the ruble as a priority task. We must make the ruble convertible in the very near future.

Everything will be done for the establishment in practice of all forms of economic management, the demonopolization of the economy, and the encouragement of enterprise and of small and medium-sized businesses. Let each form of economic management prove its viability, compete, and establish itself. Powerful incentives need to be brought into play.

The economy must be people-oriented, of course, because we are talking about our socialist choice, where attention is centered on concern for people. But it must not be ideologized. It must be socially oriented and match our ideas of social justice. It must be democratic and oriented toward people so they are given the opportunity to display their talent in organizing and running things. This is what we have to do.

This year must see real steps taken in terms of freedom of economic activity for kolkhozes, sovkhozes, agrifirms, peasant farms, personal subsidiary farms, and so forth. It is necessary to embark on the implementation of land reform with a view to creating the legal economic preconditions for the all-around development of all forms of farm management on the land.

We intend to implement an extensive package of major measures for the economy's structural perestroyka. The newly emerged opportunities for intensifying the scientific and technical progress must be utilized. We need a large-scale program. Its foundations have already been laid. As regards the conversion of defense industry enterprises, comrades, we have great opportunities here despite all the difficulties this sector of the economy is experiencing. We have there the best fixed assets, the best cadres, the best designers and scientists. This sector is most in tune with the latest high technology developments. All this must be utilized in order to produce a favorable effect on the development of all sectors in the economy.

We need new incentives stemming from the reform of ownership relations and the transition to new forms of economic management. We also need new technologies which will lead to savings of resources and live labor and will result in high productivity. If our productivity remains at its present level, we will lack the requisite national income and will squander our labor resources and our vast material and natural resources alike.

We must end up with a different economy, bearing in mind that this will be accompanied by a package of measures for working people's social protection. And primarily for those strata of the population that need it most—families with children, pensioners, the disabled, students, and student youth in general.

As for the state, comrades, it will pursue a large-scale long-term policy of legal and material support for scientific institutions, public education, and culture, and will comprehensively promote the buildup of spiritual potential.

We need a judicial and legal reform. Without this we will be unable to build a rule-of-law state, and none of our state and social institutions will function smoothly. We will be unable to ensure the necessary environment for consistent exercise of man's freedoms and rights, wherever he might live or work.

Generally, I would like to say that we have clarity as regards what needs to be done.

And one more point. We are not living somewhere beyond the pale of civilization and we must be interested in what is happening around us. No, a country like ours will be unable to implement its plans without the pursuit of an active and peaceloving foreign policy with a view to further encouraging and advancing the disarmament processes, diminishing confrontation, and releasing resources for the solution of domestic and primarily social tasks.

This is why I would like to reply yet again, for the umpteenth time, to all the critics of the foreign policy being pursued within the framework of the new thinking. There may be points which merit criticism, maybe certain partial amendments are needed. On the whole, however, the country needs our foreign policy which is in line with our interests and is welcomed by the peoples. As for the attempts to cast aspersions on it, to take advantage of it, and to speculate with it—they also originate from those selfsame quarters which would like to revert to the past.

We cannot be diverted from the correct path. We are in favor of a switch to new structures of regional and global security. In favor of rejection of bloc confrontation, in favor of collective security and enhancement of the role played by the United Nations and all its institutions.

Even a summarized version of the action program, comrades, indicates the major tasks facing us, and they all must be solved simultaneously. This will demand a pooling of efforts by all of society's healthy forces, by all who value our fatherland's future and who are interested in the implementation of perestroyka in deed rather than in words.

And even though I realize that certain specific topics are much closer to your hearts, I would nonetheless like to turn back yet again to the question of the disposition of political forces. This is a very important question. It is very important to ensure that we all have a clear idea of it and draw the correct conclusions, because this will determine our policy and our actions. The point at issue is—and you can see and sense this—that we have

recently witnessed a radicalization of the positions held by all political force, parties, and movements, a hardening of demands. All this has intensified the trend toward society's social split, toward civic confrontation.

This is very serious, comrades. This is why I am returning to this topic yet again, right after my speech to the scientists and intelligentsia in Minsk. I started my visit to Belorussia on this topic and I would like to end on it, having expressed a few more fresh opinions so as to further develop my arguments in support of that which I formulated as general principles.

The polarization of political forces is accompanied by confrontation and conflicts. They can be reduced and halted by means of simultaneous and coordinated actions along three avenues. One is the stepping up of practical measures for extrication from the economic crisis. Another one is the immediate signing of the new Union Treaty. The third is the creation of a stable political coalition of centrist forces.

In my view, the development of the situation in the country is objectively promoting the transformation of the centrist political orientation into a predominant and dominating political movement. The interpretation of political centrism ought to be based on the premise that it is not a rigidly determined position but a political space conditioned by the dynamics of the political process itself, in terms of our own conditions. A genuine centrist position will not accept a return to Stalinism and stagnation. In this sense, any political party's successes and failures alike will be determined by whether it will be capable of making the masses follow it.

But a genuine centrist position also finds unacceptable the adventurism of forces which style themselves radical, because they often lack a real base, disregard the processes under way in society, and promote the wrong slogans. Taking into account the original and extremely contradictory nature of the prevailing political situation, the CPSU simply cannot lose the initiative in creating a coalition of centrist forces on the basis of rallying the democratic parties and movements which give priority to the people's interests and advocate the Union's unity from internationalist positions.

Attempts must be made to include in this coalition the whole of the most authoritative section of the workers, trade union, youth, women's and veterans' movement.

Political centrism is a line of healthy political thinking, consideration, and consistent solution of pressing problems in the interests of all of society's working strata. This is the political meaning of such a coalition. It goes without saying that the question of taking into account and expressing the different economic and social interests of centrist policy is the main issue from the viewpoint of the attitudes toward this policy adopted by various social groups and political parties and movements.

Centrist policy means a line of accord between and consideration for all the interests which objectively exist in society within the framework of genuine socialist renewal. The organic ties between this centrist line and everything that corresponds with the interests of the socialist orientation in the country's development generally indicate the patriotic nature of this realistic centrism. This is not a narrow but a relatively broad spectrum of political orientation. In our own conditions it can be limited by the most general but principled criteria of the socialist nature and interests of progressive social development, in line with society's objective state and its historical traditions, morals, and mentality.

Following all this, listen to me and I will tell you something seditious, which we all must ponder; I have thought this out and I am saying it deliberately and with conviction: The centrist line can and must encompass both the left-of-center and the right-of-center streams, taking into account their moderate and radical nature. We do not believe that only adventurists are at work to the right and the left of us. Yes, there are some leaders who are pushing us all into the unknown; some are demanding a return to the past while others are galloping ahead without considering the realities, the state of mind, and society's state in general. But there are also many healthy forces to be found there. We said this at the 28th congress: We are abandoning the claim to monopoly of power, the party is prepared to compete with all. Today we are the victors, we are trusted, we are a ruling party. But while remaining the ruling party, we invite all patriotic and democratic forces to cooperate in the interests of attaining perestroyka's goals. We said this. This must be done. But some party organizations forgot all about it after the 28th congress.

Comrades, cooperation is possible only provided there is agreement on the balance of different interests demanding the existence of a major political center. In the conditions of our reality, however, there are quite a few difficulties in the shaping and rallying of political forces of a centrist orientation. This must also be realized. Why make a secret of it, many people find a centrist position somewhat akin to unprincipledness, lack of conviction, and even equivocation. At best, it is perceived as indicating a vague and temporizing political stance. Fine, but let me say right away that, in time, this idea will come to fruition also among you. We have people saying: "Let's strike out and do a good job." But we ought to say: Let us think of unification so as to avoid a repetition of head-on clashes between blacks, whites, reds, blues, and so on. After all, this is our country and our people, why have a clash or confrontation at the stage of most profound and fateful changes in the country's life. There are supreme interests which are above the interests of any political party. These are the interests of society, the fundamental interests of the people as a whole.

Think about it, comrades. I would not want you to take my word for it, think about it and you will also arrive at the same conclusion.

Attention must be given to the fact that quite a few people pit the centrist policy against the policy of persistent and resolute actions, in view of the acutely critical situation in many of the country's regions which is really striking at working people's living standards. At first glance this does appear incompatible. How come—resoluteness, and then suddenly a centrist position?

This is how—resoluteness in the maintenance and strengthening of stability, in building up the cohesion and unity of all democratic forces committed to perestroyka's goals. This is where we need resoluteness, this is where success lies, not in the "Come on, let's get him!" methods used in 1938 and in later years.

In this context it is very important to understand that political centrism does not in any way exclude from its arsenal resolute and radical actions to deal with pressing problems if there is an objectively pressing need for such actions and they can be utilized in the interests of the overwhelming section of society.

The main idea of centrism at present and in the long run is, without any doubt, the idea of civic or national accord. But this idea itself demands the quest for formulas. This is not an unprincipled accord. Not accord at any price but accord on the basis of the goals accepted by the majority of the people. This is what the CPSU proposes. This is why it now has the moral right and political competence to advocate the creation of such a mighty political center whose base would be the bulk of people, of Soviet people who have not lost their common sense or their responsibility for their state's future.

Therefore the formula of national accord must stem from the concept of democratic socialism proposed by the CPSU, because it contains sufficient universally applicable and general democratic demands: rule-of-law state, separation of powers, mixed market economy, social justice, and human rights and freedoms. It also accords with the interests of most of the country's citizens, since these demands are to a greater or lesser extent present in statements by other political parties and movements. This is the point of contact and the starting point for collaboration.

We must aim at ensuring that the CPSU becomes the integrating factor for all centrist forces. For this purpose it ought to overcome its own centrifugal forces, it must become dynamic and open. It must define its attitude toward dogmatic-conservative forces advocating socialism without democracy, as well as toward liberal-bourgeois forces advocating democracy without socialism.

Special responsibility in this context must be borne by Communists in the legislature who must not only create their own factions but also collaborate with all deputies who are worried about the country's future. We have started learning this, and we are being successful. This is how we must act. And with these reflections on this very important topic, I would like to conclude my speech.

Speaks With Lipovka Workers

LD2803233791

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian at 1800 GMT on 28 February, during the "Vremya" newscast, carries a 5-minute report on USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev's 28 February visit to the Belorussian town of Lipovka. Gorbachev has visited Lipovka, one of 20 new settlements being built for the people evacuated from the contaminated zone, the announcer says. The residents of Samotevichi will move here this summer. Video shows a building site with rows of unfinished cottages and construction workers. Gorbachev approaches a group of people gathered to meet him and speaks with a woman plasterer who complains about low wages, annual leave of only 18 days and low pensions.

Gorbachev says: "The main question was about pensions. Several tens of billions were spent on pensions. This is a large, an enormous, increase. It was decided to introduce these pensions despite the difficulties we have with finances, with money circulation. People have waited for this new pension system for a long time, and we shall be introducing it. Therefore, we are not delaying it, although it is difficult.

"In connection with this, the next question was about annual leave. When we have estimated this—if we are to introduce this new leave system now, we should then be installing another press for printing money. The possibilities? What is paper money? Therefore, there are no such possibilities yet. Therefore, we should arrive now at the law on pensions. By the way, there were suggestions for not introducing the law on pensions. But so many people have been waiting for it for so long, there are more than 60 million pensioners, and others are on the way. So, this question should have been somehow removed. It was the main one. The next question will be about the annual leave."

In response to complaints from the crowd about how far they have to travel to work, and losses they incur, Gorbachev says: "Let us not think about the losses now, when we are talking about the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident. This, you understand, is necessary here to help people out of this misfortune. On the contrary, I want to tell you my warmest words as a president, because we have come here. Well, who is to help? We should help. This is our common misfortune. All the country is participating in this."

A man wishes Gorbachev good luck, and wishes that God will help him. Gorbachev answers: "No, I still put my hope in you."

Asked if his visit to Belorussia will bring any changes, Gorbachev says: "There are questions which have to be decided on the oblast and republican levels. This should be done. Each should do its own work. As each of you is doing your work, so do the authorities of the rayon, the oblast, the republic. There are questions which the

Union government will have to examine and decide upon. We have agreed which questions should be examined there. At the request of the republics, we have left the construction to them. Everything is now in the republics, we have left the construction to them. Everything is now in the republics. No, only the Ministry of the Installation and Special Construction Work—it is, you know, construction work, such as some new capacities they are constructing in Novo-Polotsk—and the Ministry of Transportation construction—the one that builds the roads. This is all that there is on the Union level. This will remain so. All the rest has been handed over here, the collective farm construction work, all the rest."

People then complain about cooperative construction workers earning more than state workers.

Gorbachev says, in response: "No, no, let them compete, and you, too, compete with them. I think that what you are saying is precisely the question which, as I see it, worries all of us. We see that if the question about construction as a whole, about the construction workers, will not be considered, people are already leaving this very important branch of industry. How shall we live and carry out work in the country, and in any of the republics, in any town, without the construction worker? Everything needs to be reconstructed. The countryside should be built up. The towns should be built up. We should be building new enterprises. All this means construction workers. Therefore, this is not a republican but a state problem. We shall be examining it. I think that what you were saying about the construction workers was right."

Addresses Mogilev Oblast Residents

LD2803225291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Remarks by USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev at the Samotevichi "Club," Mogilev Oblast, Belorussia, on 28 February; from the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] I want primarily to express words of sympathy to the people who have found themselves in such a catastrophe. I have already said that Belorussia is distinguished by its kind nature, endurance, industry, and kind attitude to other peoples, probably because history formed all these character traits in them and they are already being passed on with the mother's milk from generation to generation. It was very nice to see. Indeed, this process continues now, although it has been clouded by severe misfortune.

How is Belorussia raising itself up? It is only being raised by man, by man's labor. Then, the first things I want to say to you are words of fervent approval of that labor you are contributing to our common cause. This great misfortune has befallen all of us, because this is not only your misfortune, but our common misfortune; but it has hit you directly.

I think the republic has questions about resources. Here, both the center and all the other republics must come to its assistance. I think you have a right to rely on this, especially if we consider that these are not such enormous resources, with regard to the construction of several settlements. They should be done as quickly as possible. Here you especially feel how difficult this all is, when life, the basis of life, is destroyed. When you talk about how it will be if the Union is destroyed, it is even more frightening and has unforeseeable consequences. What are those people who have left their republics, built roads, built factories, got things going, made themselves at home, settled in there, and put down roots to do.

Seventy-five million people live beyond the borders of their republics. If it came into someone's head—and it has already come into some people's heads—[changes thought] ...but still, I think that the basic mass of our people, Soviet people, realize that to demolish this world which has formed over centuries, centuries, is a most criminal thing.

Yes, the republics should be given rights, more powers, other powers. So culture and language and literature develop. We are doing this. This must be done, renovation of our Union. We must review mutual relations so that people feel themselves to be masters.

But this is one thing. But if everything which has formed is ripped up—and we are all very independent—when an enterprise stops somewhere, the whole country feels it immediately.

Moldovan Parties Demand Snegur Resignation

PM0103200991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 Mar 91 First Edition p 5

[PRAVDA correspondent A. Pasechnik report: "Moldova: Strike in the Legislature"]

[Text] Kishinev, 1 Mar—"A crisis of authority?"—over the last week this question has been voiced in one way or another in virtually all newspapers and television commentaries relating to the situation in Moldova. There is no question about it after yesterday's Moldovan legislature sitting—there is a crisis.

Admittedly, to be accurate, there was no sitting as such yesterday. Deputies spent the whole day in the Supreme Soviet building, but most of them simply failed to put in an appearance in the conference hall, staging a legislative strike, so to speak. Why?

We have already reported that M. Snegur, president of the Moldova SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic], unexpectedly resigned, attributing this to increasing attacks on him from various quarters and—most importantly—to great difficulties in his work with the republic's prime minister, M. Druk. The legislature refused his resignation. In turn M. Snegur said that he could no longer remain a "presidential figurehead," demanding the immediate reform of the entire executive. However, the

relevant constitutional amendments making provision for this authority to be transferred to the president and for a republic cabinet of ministers to be formed did not pass the vote.

That might have been expected. The creation of a cabinet of ministers means the automatic resignation of the incumbent government headed by M. Druk. The latter enjoys the unconditional support of the Moldova People's Front with its impressive bloc of deputies in the legislature. Finding itself in another deadlock, the Moldova legislature decided to extricate itself in the usual way—by moving onto the next question on the session's agenda. And... landed on the next mine in the shape of debates over the foreign economic activity conducted by M. Druk's government.

The findings of the two Supreme Soviet commissions which were instructed to check out this activity that were distributed to deputies, in my opinion, plunged certain legislators into a state of shock. Barter was the name of the game. In exchange for foreign goods Moldova generously offered goods that have long been in short supply here: eggs, iceboxes, canned goods, crockery, honey, textiles... What, incidentally, was received in exchange? Quality foreign automobiles, video systems, cassettes.

Deputies pointed out that this "business" is nothing other than looting the republic, laying the blame above all on the government and demanding that its leadership explain all its actions. Not least because a great deal of this was done under the lofty patronage of the premier himself. Regrettably, no explanations were forthcoming, not counting the grating references to "machinations on the part of the center." Legislators heard no intelligible answers from the government as to the program for extricating the republic from the increasing economic crisis. Apart from M. Druk in his characteristic eccentric manner frankly saying: I'll present you with a program when we leave the empire...

This was probably the last straw as far as deputies' patience was concerned. Yesterday morning four deputies' clubs—the agrarians, "Soviet Moldova," the Communists, and the independents—despite pressure and even threats said that they would not attend the sitting until M. Druk's government hands in its resignation.

The premier refused to resign...

Legislature Recess Ordered

PM0103215691 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Mar 91 Union Edition p 3

[Eduard Kondratov report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Legislative Crisis in Moldova"]

[Text] Kishinev—The republic's listeners and viewers waited in vain for the session to be relayed. Most members of the legislature refused to enter the hall after the morning registration, saying that they would only take part in the sitting if the prime minister immediately resigned.

However, Mircha Druk categorically refused to voluntarily quit his post. He was backed by deputies representing the Moldova People's Front. The Supreme Soviet was reminiscent of an agitated beehive until late that evening.

The legislature had previously spent two days discussing a report from the standing commission, which gave a crushing assessment of the government's foreign economic activity after studying it. The commission charged the prime minister with conducting damaging import-export deals for Moldova.

However, the import-export operations that aroused deputies' indignation were perhaps only a convenient excuse for a determined attack on M. Druk. Legislative stormclouds have been gathering over him for a long time. There is a long list of complaints about Druk. Whereas some deputies accused him of amateurish activity, incompetence, and lack of any economic strategy, others recalled the bloody events in Dubossary, the mass mobilization of volunteers during the Gagauz crisis, which almost ended in tragedy, and his anti-Sovietism and calls to break with the "empire." He was also blamed for violating ethical norms in connection with foreign assignments.

The Supreme Soviet Presidium opposed the premier's resignation and proposed discussing the question of reforming the executive. A legislative majority resisted this; a week earlier attempts to effect reform involving the transfer of executive administrative power to the president were blocked on a vote.

Finally, Aleksandr Moshanu, chairman of the Moldova SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet, announced that the session was in recess for an indefinite period. He told deputies to go back to their constituencies to really set about carrying out the legislature's decision—to oppose the all-Union referendum. The population's participation in this referendum, he said, would constitute an expression of no confidence in the republic's leadership. The republic's president, Mircha Snegur, also issued a statement opposing the referendum on Moldova territory.

Little Support for Donbass Miners' Strike

LD0103222291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Video report by correspondent G. Kondaurov, including interview with K.G. Fesenko, worker at the Kochegarka mine, in Donetsk on 1 March from the "Vremya" newscast—recorded]

[Text] As we have already reported, the regional union of strike committees of the Donbass called for a miners'

general strike to be held in this region on 1 March. A report form our correspondent in Donetsk.

[Kondaurov] A rally by the participants in the strike was set for today, on this square near the building of the obkom of the party. But as you can see, the square is empty. The rally did not take place. Just a small group of people gathered here—no more than 100 people. The situation is calm everywhere in the Donbass today. It is an ordinary working day. According to control office data received by us at the end of the day, at just five out of 214 mines in the Donbass some of the workers refused to go down the coal face in the morning. At some mines the extraction of coal has not stopped, but its loading has been suspended. They refused to load three hundred and thirty railcars, or one-tenth of all of the fuel sent to consumers in a 24-hour period.

The strike calls of the regional union strike committee in the Donbass have not met with broad support among the miners. At meetings, the majority of labor collectives decided that such an extreme measure as the complete halting of the mines is impermissible now for resolving a labor conflict, although the main demand—to raise wages, which do not conform to the rising cost of living and the excessive difficulty of a miner's work—is supported in all mining collectives.

[Fesenko] I think that the motivation that the strike committee put forward—that is, that the overall standard of living is growing more expensive—is a motivation that is acceptable to all working people of the country, to the whole population of the country, and not only to miners. But, well, such a strike, and all the more so one which lays special emphasis upon a demand that is practically impossible to implement, could lead to a situation in which all those around might take offence at the miners. That offence could be used in any situation, and all the more so on the threshold of the referendum on 17 March. It was most probably a purely political maneuver [raskladka].

Ukraine Leader on Referendum Issues

LD2702234791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 27 Feb 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] The question of the forthcoming all-Union referendum was discussed today at the session of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent V. Lyaskalo] We shall have yet another ballot paper here in the Ukraine and yet another question, which will be formulated here at our session. Is this some kind of opposition to the Union referendum, the Union ballot paper? Is this the beginning of, as it were, a kind of star wars already at the level of referenda in politics?

[L.M. Kravchuk, Chairman of the Ukraine Supreme Soviet] There is no opposition here because, both in the first and in the second ballot paper, we are in favor of the Union. We are not drawing up the question as, let us say, in some regions, where one can read in the text a subtext which, in general, gives the impression of being against the Union. We have been, are, and will be in favor of the Union. But the question always arises here: What sort of union?

The text of the ballot paper is complicated. If it read, let's say: "Do you want the Soviet Union to be preserved?" there would be no question in anyone's mind. Not in anyone's mind, I am sure. But, I repeat once more, there is no opposition in our text because both texts favor the preservation of the Union.

[Lyaskalo] It has to be made more complicated, then.

[Kravchuk] There is no need to dramatize or complicate things. We are simply talking about different versions of the union, different forms of the union. But that is pluralism. Incidentally, our president favors a different form of union, and the formulation of a union of sovereign states is his; we did not think it up.

[Lyaskalo] The idea of holding a totally independent republican referendum was also discussed, that is, holding it on a different day from the Union one, although that would cost a further R22 million. Eventually they reached general agreement and voted to hold a poll of the population of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic on 17 March at the same time as the all-Union referendum and to include in the second ballot paper this question: "Do you agree that the Ukraine must be within the composition of a union of soviet sovereign states in accordance with the principles of the declaration of the state sovereignty of the Ukraine?" [end recording]

Caucasus

Heavy Machine-Gun Fire Reported in Tskhinvali

LD0203184991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] Last night, housing units in Tskhinvali were subjected to intensive heavy machine-gun fire from the woods and from a State Motor Vehicle Inspection Directorate post where a subunit of the Georgian militia is stationed. Disorderly firing was also noted in the environs of the city. The Ossetian side also returned fire. There are wounded among the inhabitants of the city.

As the press center of the extraordinary committee attached to the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the North Ossetia Soviet Socialist Republic told a TASS correspondent, a sapper unit of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs interior troops is carrying out around-the-clock restoration work on the bridge near the village of Kekhvi, which was blown up three days ago, in order to ready the road for the delivery of foodstuffs to Tskhinvali. So far flour, medicines, and fuel are being

delivered to the city only by helicopter; but their flights are often postponed because of the snowfall in the mountains.

Although the energy blockade of the oblast has been lifted completely, electricity is being supplied to homes intermittently. Inhabitants of South Ossetia are unable to watch the central television program "Vremya," because the current to populated areas is switched off at this time.

According to data from the North Ossetia Ministry of Internal Affairs, an attempt was made to blow up a water main in the environs of Tskhinvali today.

As before, the fate of the drivers of heavy motor vehicles seized by armed persons as hostages five days ago near the village of Kekhvi, is still unknown.

Refugees are continuing to arrive in North Ossetia. According to official reports, to date there are around 12,000 of them, including more than 6,000 children.

Humanitarian aid for the population of South Ossetia is arriving in Vladikavkaz from all over the country.

[Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian at 1545 GMT on 2 March, during the "Vremya" newscast, broadcast a report by correspondent Guglya on the situation in South Ossetia, where convoys into Tskhinvali have had their way blocked. Guglya reports that "according to the temporary USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs press center, which is now in Tskhinvali, one of these columns, in which there were over 30 vehicles, was stopped in the region of the Kekhvi village and pillaged. Several firearms have been discovered among the foodstuffs. Six people have remained as hostages of the attackers. As a result of this, after a few days the Tskhinvali bakery combine stopped altogether because of the lack of flour. The indignant inhabitants of the town have demanded that the oblast leadership carry out a protest rally."]

Conflicting Information Received

LD0303221391 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 3 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] [Unidentified correspondent] Despair and anger have taken over these people, inhabitants of Urbnisi, (?Yavny), and Ruisi, who have been attending the funeral procession of their fellow villagers killed as a result of a sudden attack by Osetian gunmen. In the recent period this stretch of road by the Georgian motor vehicle inspection post has been used more and more often, in spite of Osetian pickets, by Georgians and Osetians; some buy groceries, some hurry off to their relatives, and some leave their homes forever. Any freight could be delivered by this road without hindrance, and the artificially created blockade could then be lifted, and the Osetian population—there are practically no Georgians left in Tskhinvali—would have much less deprivation to put up with.

But who could complaints then be directed against? Who could be blamed, and how could the public of the Union be set against the Republic of Georgia and its people? Wasn't the same aim being pursued by the recent news, prepared by the presss center of the extraordinary headquarters of the North Osetian Oblast Soviet Executive Committee, on an attack alleged to have been carried out by Georgian gunmen on internal affairs units of the USSR [Internal Affairs Ministry] MVD? [video shows funeral procession, troops at inspection post; cuts to interview with man in soldier's uniform standing next to armored car, captioned as A.L. Rostovtsev, head of USSR MVD press center]

[begin Rostovtsev recording] This was at the entrance into Tskhinvali, into the town itself. For practically four hours, more than four hours, there was a battle with bandits—I'll use this world bluntly. The information given in the program "Vremya," that the shooting was carried out by Georgians, is not our information, and is not reliable information. We don't know who did the shooting—Osetians or Georgians. [end recording]

[Announcer] I would like to note that the information on 1 March was not our information. It was received by our program through TASS channels, citing the press center of the extraordinary committee at the North Osetian Supreme Soviet.

MVD Suspected of Instigation

AU0403101491 Tbilisi Domestic Service in Georgian 0300 GMT 4 March 91

[Text] The press center of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Georgia reports that the situation in Tskhinvali is very tense. Throughout the night of 3 March, Ossetian extremists, using machine guns and submachine guns, continually fired at Georgian militia posts. [word indistinct] both the crews of armored personnel carriers belonging to the Internal Troops and units of Internal Troops did nothing to stop the firing on the part of the Ossetian extremists. Naturally, one begins to suspect that, perhaps [words indistinct] the firing was instigated in advance by internal assault troopers located in the town together with the extremists in order to (?further) a little more cooperation between them. During the day, it was relatively peaceful in the region if we do not take account of (?the firing) from Tskhinvali.

Food Situation 'Catastrophic'

LD0303192291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1745 GMT 3 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 3 Mar (TASS)—There was intensive shooting last night in Tskhinvali and surrounding areas.

Fighters belonging to illegal Georgian armed groups opened fire several times on residential areas. The Ossetian side was also involved in the shooting. People from the town were wounded. This was what a TASS correspondent was told today at the press center of the emergency committee under the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the South Ossetian Soviet Sovialist Republic. A unit of engineers and sappers from the USSR Internal Affairs Ministry internal troops continues work to restore the bridge in the village of Kekhvi so that goods can be rought into Tskhinvali. The bridge was blown up four days ago.

According to the North Ossetian Internal Affairs Ministry, the food situation in Tskhinvali is catastrophic. The town is effectively sealed off. The Georgian side controls all roads leading to the area covered by the state of emergency. Dozens of heavy goods vehicles carrying humanitarian aid for the people of South Ossetia from krays, oblasts, and republics around the country have been held up in the village of Dzhava. Airmen have come to the aid of the drivers. They have organized a Dzhava-Tskhinvali "airlift." But, the opportunities for helicopters are severaly restricted because of fog and snow in the hills.

Although the Gruzglavenergo association lifted the energy blockade on the oblast a week ago, the electricity supply to homes is severely disrupted.

There is still no information about the fate of people in remote Ossetian villages in South Ossetia. The Georgian side is also refusing to provide information on the fate of eight drivers from North Ossetia who were bringing food to Tskhinvali when they were seized by Georgian fighters six days ago ner the village of Kekhvi.

The flood of refugees from Ossetian villages in Georgia continues to increase in North Ossetia. According to the emergency committee, so far there are over 12,000, including over 6,000 children. Urgent measaures are being taken here to accomodate them and provide them with what they need.

Random Fire Fights in NKAO

LD0303140791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1329 GMT 3 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Stepanakert, 3 March (TASS)—Saturday in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast [NKAO] was a bloody day. As a TASS correspondent was informed in the NKAO and adjacent Azerbaijan rayons' state of emergency area commandat's office, during the night of 2 March a group of 15-20 Azerbaijanis attacked a farm in Aterk, an Armenian village in Mardakertskiy rayon, with automatic weapons. The farm's guard was killed and his wife injured, and 75 cows and six horses were driven off the farm. The Armenian village of Farrukh, Askeranskiy rayon, was fired on. An army subunit which arrived at the scene was also shot at with automatic weapons and three mortar shells from the direction of the Azerbiajani village of Dzhinli. Fortunately no one was seriously injured. A search is going on for the criminals and weapons which were used to shoot at the Armenian village and soldiers.

In the afternoon, near the Armenian village of Gevorkavan, Martuninskiy rayon, NKAO, unknown people opened fire with automatic weapons at a passenger car carrying Azerbaijanis, three of whom were injured. Then, near the Azerbaijani village of Yukhary Veysaly a tractor carrying Armenians was fired on with automatic weapons. Three people were killed and two injured.

At 1740 between Azerbaijani Khodzhavend and Armenian Martuni, an intense exchange of fire with automatic weapons and grenade launchers began. As a result one Azerbaijani was killed. The commandant's office of the state of emergency area has taken extreme measures; barriers have been erected between residential areas, and additional forces of soldiers and military equipment have been brought into Martuninskiy rayon.

Ossetians Attack Georgian Troops, Civilians

LD0103205191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1905 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Tbilisi, 1 Mar (TASS)—After two days of relative calm, the Ossetian side renewed its attacks on officers of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs and the civilian population of Georgian nationality, SAKINFORM correspondent Eduard Ediberidze reports. Last night, a Georgian State Motor Vehicle Inspectorate post, and the temporary headquarters of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic were fired on from the direction of Tskhinvali. A private of the patrol and point-duty service was wounded. The attacks were repeated all night. Units of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs Internal Troops were also fired on. During the night there was also an attack upon the village of Tamarasheni, two villagers were wounded.

Shooting Reported Overnight

LD0103204891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1900 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 1 Mar (TASS)—The situation in South Osesetia remains tense, a TASS correspondent was told at the press center of the emergency committee of the Supreme Soviet of the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic.

There was intensive shooting in the environs of Tskhinvali during last night. The Georgian side fired on a unit of the internal troops of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs. Several members of the Georgian armed formations were wounded in the crossfire.

Despite the total lifting of the power blockade of the oblast, South Ossetia remains inside a tight ring of

economic isolation. According to reports by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of South Ossetia, there is a food shortage in Tskhinvali; the local bakery is closed, and supplies of flour have given out. Trucks with flour, which have been sent there, are held up at Dzhava, unable to proceed further.

Humanitarian aid for the population of South Ossetia is still reaching Vladikavkaz. Refrigerated vehicles and large trucks arrived there today from Lipetsk and Kursk Oblasts, Kabardino-Balkara, Stavropol Kray, Moldova, Moldova, Moscow, and Leningrad.

Deputy Advocates 'Intervention'

LD0103113891 Moscow TASS in English 1112 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Isachenkov]

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—Only the intervention by Union authorities can stop the bloodshed in South Ossetia, Anatoliy Chekhoyev, Soviet people's deputy from South Ossetia, told TASS.

Since the Georgian legislature failed to comply with the demand by the USSR Supreme Soviet to impose a state of emergency in all of South Ossetia (a state of emergency was initially imposed in provincial capital Tskhinvali) the only way out is for President Mikhail Gorbachev to impose a state of emergency by a presidential decree, Chekhoyev said.

This move, however, will "escalate tensions in regions not affected by the conflict", Georgian parliament chairman Zviad Gamsakhurdia wrote in a letter to Supreme Soviet Chairman Anatoliy Lukyanov on February 25.

Gamsakhurdia said he was prepared to begin talks with Ossetian representatives if "Ossetian militants cease their activities".

Chekhoyev was skeptical about Gamsakhurdia's proposal, saying it aimed to "postpone a settlement".

"Before sitting down at the negotiating table, we must part the warring sides and disarm illegal armed units—and only a third force can do this," Chekhoyev said.

"A dialogue cannot go on at gunpoint, at a time when Ossetian villages are defenseless before extremists' attacks," he said.

Gamsakhurdia wants to avoid the imposition of a state of emergency by the president pretending to negotiate, Chekhoyev said.

The conflict in South Ossetia began after local leaders declared the autonomous area "a democratic republic within the USSR" in December and then held parliamentary elections.

The Georgian leadership regarded the move as an attempt to "separate a portion of the republic's historical territory" and abolished South Ossetia's autonomous status.

The conflict is political, rather than inter-ethnic, Chekhoyev believes. Georgia plans to secede from the Soviet Union while South Ossetia wants to remain in the union, he explained.

Georgian Supreme Soviet Appeals to UN

LD0103210691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1920 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Tbilisi, 1 Mar (TASS)—The Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Georgia has appealed for the immediate appointment of a competent commission including UN and European Parliament experts to study on the spot the true facts of the events in South Ossetia and the situation in Abkhaziya.

As reported today by the SAKINFORM correspondent, Eduard Ediberidze, the appeal is contained in a "message from the parliament of the republic to the United Nations Organization and to the peoples and governments of the countries of the world." It states that the events which are taking place on the territory of Shida Kartli [South Ossetia] are being served up by the media of the USSR and of a number of foreign countries in a completely distorted form and "do not even approximately reflect the reality." "The coordinated actions of the Ossetian guerillas, military units, and mass media show that Georgia is deliberately being confronted with the dilemma of either signing the Union treaty or being deprived of its age-old territory of Shida Kartli and Abkhaziya."

With regard to the Abkhaz Autonomous Republic, the message aserts that "several hundred paratroops have been dropped there without the Government of Georgia being notified." The Georgian leadership connects this with "the measures which are being taken by the Kremlin with the object of creating new hotbeds of destabilization on the territory of the republic," and regard it as "aggression against the republic."

The message also requests the international public to "give Georgia all the forms of assistance provided for by international law for the protection of a sovereign state from any kind of aggression."

Miners Strike Continues at Some Donetsk Mines

LD0203162391 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Excerpts] [Announcer Yelena Berezovskaya] Now a report from Donetsk. We have very contradictory information. We have therefore asked our correspondent Gennadiy Kondaurov to state more clearly what has been learned today about the miners' strike. Go ahead.

[Kondaurov] Hello.

[Berezovskaya] Good day.

[Kondaurov] Miners in the Krasnoarmeyskugol production association are on strike today. There is absolutely no work going on at the Stakhanov and Krasnolimanskaya mines, the largest in the Ukraine; but some miners have gone down to the coal face at the other four mines in the association. The extraction of coal in the association and its dispatch consumers, however, are virtually completely paralyzed. The strike began here yesterday, and in the last 24 hours the association has lost 23,000 tonnes of coal and several million rubles.

A large rally of participants in the strike took place at the Stakhanov mine this morning. [passage omitted]

Political demands aimed at the CPSU and the country's president and government were also heard at the rally. Some speakers said that they are incapable of extricating the country from the abyss. The strike committee stated that the strike will continue until the government fulfills the miners' demands completely, but I cannot say anything at this time about any reaction from the republic's government or party bodies with regard to these demands. [passage omitted]

Coal is being extracted today at the other mines in Donetsk oblast and dispatched to consumers. At the Donetskugol association and some others, railway workers have even been asked for several more wagons than usual for loading. [passage omitted]

Miners Meet RSFSR Government in Moscow

LD0203162791 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1530 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] Regarding the miners' strike, we have information that all collectives of the Donbass are on strike today. Not a single tonne of coal was extracted here.

The representatives of another major basin, the Kuzbass, the representatives of Prokopyevsk, have arrived in Moscow. The miners hope to reach agreement with the Russian Government not through strikes but through talks. We have no information so far from the basin across the Polar Circle.

Armenian Legislature Favors Union Referendum

NC0103105791 Yerevan Domestic Service in Armenian 1000 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] The Armenian Republic's Supreme Soviet session is continuing deliberations today. Almost all the laws and decisions adopted by our new legislature have a watershed significance in the process of independence.

Similarly, the issues on the agenda under discussion for the last few days are also crucial for our republic.

The television and radio audience heard during the last two days the political debate at the legislature in which more than 40 deputies participated. Yesterday, the chairman of the Supreme Soviet delivered an extensive speech in which he expressed the views of the republic's authorities on the Union and republican referendums. At yesterday's evening session the republic group of people's deputies proposed that the views of the representatives of all political groups and public and political organizations be heard today and only then a final decision should be taken.

Levon Ter-Petrosyan, chairman of the Supreme Soviet, who was chairing the session today, acceded to the demands of some of the people's deputies and gave the podium to Vazgen Manukyan, chairman of the Council of Ministers.

Then the following issue was voted upon: Is the republic going to hold a union referendum? One hundred eighty-two voted in favor, none against, and one abstained. The motion was adopted.

Next the representatives of the various political currents and legislative factions addressed the session which is still continuing deliberations.

Armenia To Boycott Referendum; Seeks Secession

LD0103164991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1522 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Yerevan, 1 Mar (TASS-Armenpress)—Armenia will not be taking part in the all-Union referendum on 17 March, the republic's parliament decided today.

In the view of the deputies this contradicts the right of nations to self-determination. The decision adopted at a regular sitting of the session of the Armenian Supreme Soviet also points out that the results of the all-Union referendum will not have legal force on the republic's territory. A decision was also adopted today on the holding of a republican referendum on the question of leaving the USSR. It has been decided to hold it on 21 September.

Central Asia

Kazakh's Nazarbayev Supports Referendum

LD0203170891 Moscow TASS in English 1626 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 2 TASS—Kazakhstan favours the preservation of the Soviet Union, said Nursultan Nazarbayev, Kazakh Communist Party chief and president of the republic. He spoke on central television today in the "Political Dialogues: Who is Who?" programme. For an hour and a half he was answering questions phoned in to him.

Nazarbaev expressed support for the March 17 referendum on the problem of the preservation of the Soviet Union and said that nine union republics, including Kazakhstan, had already reached agreement on the blueprint of a new union treaty. At the same time, he pointed out that "those republics which do not want to join the

union should not be forcibly drawn into it." "It is necessary to respect the expression of the will of the people,", he said.

The Kazakh president believes that the renewed union should be cemented by an economic interest of each republic in the development of direct mutually advantageous ties.

Uzbekistan To Poll on Remaining in USSR

PM2602162791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Feb 91 Union Edition p 1

[Report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, REUTER, UPI roundup: "Second Voting Paper for Referendum in Uzbekistan"]

[Text] On referendum day inhabitants of Uzbekistan will receive an additional voting paper—that is a decision adopted by the republic's Supreme Soviet Presidium. The second voting paper, which will be handed out with the approved union voting paper, will contain the following question: "Do you agree that Uzbekistan should remain within the renewed Union (federation) as a sovereign, equal republic?" This question is necessary to give the republic's citizens a clearer understanding of the essence of the referendum. Many Uzbekistan inhabitants believe that the republic should remain within the Union. This is illustrated by sociological polls carried out in the localities, IZVESTIYA's own correspondent A. Orlov reports.

Residents Support Federation

LD0103120591 Moscow TASS in English 1155 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Pruger]

[Text] Tashkent March 1 TASS—Uzbekistan residents overwhelmingly support the preservation of the Soviet federation, according to public opinion polls.

In addition to the all-union question, Uzbekistan citizens will be asked: "Do you agree that Uzbekistan should remain within a renewed union (federaiton) as a sovereign equal republic?"

Karaganda Mine Strike Reported

PM0103201591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Mar 91 Union Edition p 3

[Oleg Stefashin report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Talks Under Way With Miners"]

[Text] Karaganda—Miners in Karaganda began a warning strike 1 March in response to a call from the mining industry workers union territorial committee and the oblast worker's committee.

Attempts by the local authorities and the republic's government to prevent the miners' action ended in failure. They did not even succeed in finding a common language with one another. However hopes of this persisted until the very last hour.

Acknowledging the miners' basic demands to be just, the oblast Soviet of People's Deputies appealed to them in a statement expressing concern at their chosen form of protest, whose result will be to destabilize the moral and psychological atmosphere and undermine confidence in our enterprises in the business world and entail serious losses. However, these appeals were not heeded by the leaders of the workers' movement. While pressing for the immediate conclusion of the Union Treaty and the adoption of a republic law on indexing working peoples incomes in connection with the price hikes, they also demanded that their other demands be carried out urgently: an increase in wages by a factor of 2-2.5 and an increase in meat delivery norms per oblast inhabitant to 75kg. Naturally, the government could not promise that.

I was told at the "Karagandaugol" Association that the strike has not been 100-percent solid. Six mines flatly refused to strike. And, although extraction has been suspended at the other 20, repair work is being carried out there without upsetting the production cycle.

Rallies are taking place at enterprises and another meeting between miners and a republic government delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister Ye. Yezhikov-Babakhanov has begun at the Palace of Culture.

Kazakh Rocket Plant To Develop TV System

LD2702120191 Moscow World Service in English 0800 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Text] A space rocket plant in this country has joined the conversion to civilian production. According to its spokesman, the plant is developing a new system of television for Kazakhstan via a Gals earth satellite. The satellite will ensure stable reception of TV programs throughout the vast territory of that republic.

Another civilian development at the plant is the use of solar batteries that space vehicles are equipped with for power supply to remote townships. Super-hard materials and alloys created for space exploration will find a use in dentistry and for making artificial limbs. Special plants will be built for the purpose.